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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

BACK RAY

by

Ruth Ennice

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BACK BAY

A group of short stories

or

satiric phantasies

- .I The Lonesomeness of Mr. Hurton
- II Little Miss Sligsby and the Muses
- III Mr. O'Flanagan and the Macillicuddy
- IV The Rival Janitors
- V Concerning Lullaby Murdock and Miss Sneath





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## THE LONESOMENESS OF MR. MURTON

Mr. Murton was a shy, quiet little man of fifty-eight. His gray hair, parted very neatly in the middle, had a tendency to curl a bit around the pink disk that was the top of Mr. Murton's head. This silvery halo gave Mr. Murton somewhat the appearance of a scholarly gentleman angel of the second degree of holiness.

Mr. Murton lived all alone in a small room on Huntington Avenue.

Mr. Murton had formerly been a taster for the Salada Tea Company, but he was now retired. For thirty-two years he had worked for the Company. He knew everyone, and everyone knew him, but somehow no one ever called him by his first name. It was "Good morning, Mr. Murton," or "Good night, Mr. Murton," but no one ever said, "So long, Launcelot!" Mr. Murton wished some one would. He felt very lonesome hearing the Jims and Harrys and the Dots and Kays greet one another.

After Mr. Murton had been out of the Company for three years, he was more lonesome than ever. Now it was just Mrs. Tibbetts, his landlady, who talked with him at all.

"Good morning, Mrs. Tibbetts," he would say at nine o'clock each day.

"Good morning, Mr. Murton," Mrs. Tibbetts would answer between swishes of her sweeping.

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Then Mr. Murton would put his soft dark green hat on his head, covering the halo very carefully, pat the pockets of his pepper-and-salt suitcoat, making sure the lower button was genteely unbuttoned, and walk up Hintington Avenue until he came to the Public Gardens. He would go to his own particular bench, dust it carefully with a pocket handkerchief, which he kept for that purpose in his left back pocket, and sit down. He would stay there until twenty-five minutes after twelve, gazing at the unfriendly swans, feeding the pathetic pigeons, counting the numerous squirrels who dragged their worn gray plumes in the dust.

In the afternoon he would go to the library in Copley Square and read big four-volumed books about birds and animals. At five o'clock he would put the volumes back on the shelves, one by one. He would adjust the heavy glasses which made his mild blue eyes appear as large as teacups, like the dig in Anderson's fairy tale, and looking at his gold watch with the words "Launcelot Murton" on the back surrounded by a cluster of grapes, he would leave the reading-room.

"Good night, Mr. Murton," the serious-eyed girl at the information desk would say.

"Good night, Miss Callahan," Mr. Murton would reply.

One day when he went to the Public Gardens he found them filled with men in blue uniforms. The bench where he usually sat and watched the swans and pigeons and counted the





worn gray squirrels was occupied by three blue uniforms and three maple canes. Mr. Murton just pretended he was walking through the park on his way to Beacon Hill. Then he went back to his small room.

"Why, Mr. Murton, home so soon?" asked Mrs. Tibbetts. "You should have waited to see the parade."

Mr. Murton smiled shyly and said he hadn't known of the parade.

Then he went to his room and tried to read, but he got restless because for three years he had spent his mornings in the open air.

"I think I'll explore the back yard," thought Mr. Murton, for he had often looked out his rear window at the gray fences and the ashcans and wondered what lay between them and the building where his room was.

He walked around the block and into the yard, because he didn't quite like the thought of having Mrs. Tibbetts see him go down the back stairway. He recognized the yard by the two green prune-juice bottles Mrs. Tibbetts had on her kitchen window sill. Mr. Murton always observed the dark green against the yellow curtains when he went down to pay his room rent.

There was no one in the yard. Mr. Murton sat down on an empty box and looked around. For a Huntington Avenue back yard the earth was quite brown and fertile looking. He knelt down and examined it. He detected a worm or two dancing



perpendicularly out of the earth in the sunlight. One worm, of a certain warm pink, interested him particularly. It seemed to possess more joie de vivre than worms usually have. It cocked its head and swayed from side to side as though keeping time to the vibration of parade drums in the distance. Now and then it would swing out its pink length in a long, wavering arc, round and round; then it would resume its silent dance. Mr. Murton, his glasses gleaming, tiny drops of saliva on his shy mouth, watched in fascination.

That evening at five minutes after five, Mrs. Tibbets looked up from her counting of the knives and forks for her family's supper, to see the small figure of Mr. Murton ascending the stairs very quietly.

"Good evening, Mr. Murton," she called out.

"Eh? Oh! Good evening, Mrs. Tibbetts, to be sure," Mr. Murton replied as he disappeared into the regions above.

Mrs. Tibbetts looked after him for a puzzled minute or two. Then she resumed her setting of the table.

"Seven forks, fourteen spoons--" she whispered to the empty dining-room.

Mr. Murton closed the door softly behind him. Then he locked it, using his left hand; his right he kept fisted in his pocket.

On the dresser was a tobacco jar given to him as a farewell gift by his fellow employees at the Salada Tea





Tea Company. Mr. Murton did not smoke, but he had always prized the jar because of the thought behind it. Now he took the jar from the dresser and emptied its contents--seven safety pins, a few tacks, and three commemorative stamps--on the scarf. He opened his fist in the jar.

Mr. Murton hummed happily to himself a song of his own composition as he set about printing a label for the jar. When it was finished he pasted it on and stood back to admire it.

"Francesca da Rimini," he murmured. He peeped over the top of the jar to see how its new occupant was getting along. There was decidedly something Italianate about the way she curled her langorous body in the exact center of the damp earth preparatory for sleep. Mr. Murton knew his choice of a name was good. He placed a blotter over the top, first having perforated it with the end of his pen, and went to bed.

The next day, contrary to his usual practice, Mr. Murton did not leave his small room at nine o'clock. When Mrs. Tibbetts went up to whisk her oil-scented cloth about, plump up the pillows on his bed and tuck the blankets in (for Mr. Murton was not a restless sleeper), she found the little man engrossed in a large volume bearing the title, Our Animal World. Mrs. Tibbetts remembered seeing its dark red back with the gold printing on Mr. Murton's table, but this was the first time she had ever seen him reading it. After she had finished her work in his room and moved on to

The Government of the United States of America  
Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
Dear Sir:  
The enclosed report contains the results of the  
survey of the land in the vicinity of the  
City of New York, and is submitted for your  
information and consideration.

Very respectfully,  
[Signature]  
[Title]  
Bureau of Land Management  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
Enclosure  
The enclosed report contains the results of the  
survey of the land in the vicinity of the  
City of New York, and is submitted for your  
information and consideration.  
Very respectfully,  
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City of New York, and is submitted for your  
information and consideration.

Mr. Bryant's, she heard Mr. Murton go out very quietly.

Mr. Murton went straight to the Boston Public Library. With great care he selected six thick volumes from the shelves and carried them to the charging desk.

"Good morning, Mr. Murton," said Miss Fane, the librarian.

"Good morning, Miss Fane," said Mr. Murton.

He carried the books out very carefully and walked down Huntington Avenue. When he got to the boarding house in which he lived, he was relieved to see that Mrs. Tibbetts had gone out. He knew she was out, because Irma, Mrs. Tibbetts' husband's niece, had come over to keep house while Mrs. Tibbetts was away.

Irma sat on the front steps with Timmy Adams and smiled at Mr. Murton as he went by.

Mr. Murton carried the books to his room and placed them on his desk. Then he took a large white envelope from the back of the middle drawer on the left-hand side. He put the envelope in his breast pocket and went out very quietly to the back yard, using the kitchen stairway.

A few minutes later Mr. Murton reentered his room. He locked the door behind him. Then he placed the large white envelope on the desk.

He carried the chair from his desk over to his closet. He reached into his little watch pocket and took out a key. This he inserted into the lock of the closet door.





He turned the knob and opened the door. Then he replaced the key in his watch pocket, stood on the chair, and, holding to the closet door with his left hand, reached way back on the hat shelf with his right. He drew out the tobacco jar with the white label on it and got down from the chair.

He put the jar on his desk. Then he reached into the wastebasket and took out yesterday's newspaper which he had asked Mrs. Tibbetts not to throw out, because he wanted to cut out the President's speech. He looked on page one to see if the President's speech was listed. Yes, there it was--page twenty-three. Mr. Murton quickly found page twenty-three and cut it out neatly. He replaced the newspaper in the basket. Then he took a pair of scissors from the top drawer of his desk and cut page twenty-three up very carefully into tiny, square pieces. He removed the blotter from the top of the jar. Then he took the large white envelope from the desk, opened it, and poured its contents alternately with the newspaper squares into the jar right over Francesca. He carried the chair from the closet back to the desk, sat down, and watched.

In about fifteen minutes the head of Francesca appeared, cleaving its way neatly through the layers of newspaper squares and brown earth. Mr. Murton was satisfied. He replaced the blotter, returned the jar to the closet, and locked the door.

That afternoon Mr. Murton went down to Massachusetts





Avenue and ordered a small shovel at Gofkauf's. He also ordered one hundred preserve jars and a large wooden box at Woolworth's. The girl at the counter said he would find the box most convenient for cigarettes. Mr. Murton felt there was no need to tell her he intended to keep dirt in it.

Now every day, after feeding Francesca her newspaper, and after drinking his own buttermilk and eating his wheat toast at Hood's, Mr. Murton went to his back yard and spent the morning there. At twenty-five minutes after twelve he walked down to the Waldorf for his lunch of salad and fruit. At one o'clock he returned to his back yard and stayed there until five. Then he went to the Old France for his dinner. One night he would have a clear vegetable soup followed by a cheese omelette; another night he would choose a fruit cup and a creamed vegetable plate. For desert he would have stewed prunes or apricots, or if it were Wednesday, a soft boiled custard. After dinner he read one of his library volumes until nine-thirty, and then went to bed.

For three months Mr. Murton dug in his back yard without detection. Each noon before he left for lunch and each evening before supper, he placed an empty orange crate over the hole near the fence, behind the ashcans. He found all kinds of interesting types of earth worms, but he was looking for a particular species of angle worm. Professor Jasper Mettington's book, Earth Worms, Their Characteristics, Their Habits, and Their Influence on the Civilized World, said this



species was very rare and found only at a level of eight feet underground. Mr. Murton dug and dug. He had an occupant for each of his hundred jars now, and on some jars the labels read:

Lucrezia Borgia  
Jezebel  
Salome  
Delilah  
Lilith

or:

Dr. Johann Faustus  
Merlin  
Rappaccini  
Thomas A. Edison

according to the characters of the occupants.

Late one Thursday afternoon, Mr. Murton's shovel hit something harder than usual. In the course of the three months he had dug up an old footstove, six Campbell soup cans (all mushroom), and a pair of grayish pink corsets rusted at the hinges. But this new obstacle didn't seem to be as small in perimeter as the stove, the cans, or the corsets. As a matter of fact, Mr. Murton couldn't imagine what it could be. He thought perhaps it was a boulder, and started out to the right and left of it, but to no avail. Finally he decided to dig right through it.

When he had cleared away most of the encrusting soil, he noticed a crack, and inserted the blade of the shovel in it. He pushed down on the handle and found that the hard obstacle was seemingly splitting in two. Just as he





made a move to toss the earth up over the edge of the narrow cylindrical shaft in which he stood, he thought he saw the rare worm mentioned by Professor Jasper Mettington in his well-known book, Earth Worms, Their Characteristics, Their Habits, and Their Influence on the Civilized World. Mr. Murton's glasses shone with pleasure. He reached out carefully to capture the quickly disappearing rarity.

There was a sudden crash. Mr. Murton felt the earth drop from under his hand. He found himself hanging head first in a great lighted cavern.

He wriggled himself cautiously downward until he could swing his feet to the floor. Then he looked about him.

Mr. Murton could see, a few feet from him, a small box-like building. There was a man sitting in it reading a magazine. When the man saw Mr. Murton approaching he appeared much surprised. He took off his tortoise-shell rimmed spectacles and stuck his neck forward as Mr. Murton came closer to the box.

"Where did you drop from?" he barked.

Mr. Murton was a trifle disconcerted.

"Well, you see," he said, "I was digging for lumbricus terrestris."

Then he realized the man probably didn't know what a lumbricus terrestris was. He started to explain, but the man's next words cut him short.

"Why," he said, and his voice had suddenly become



most friendly, "you can't find them in Boston. It's made land, you know. I have 'em in my yard out in Woburn. Earth's not so dry. Better for breedin' 'em." He smiled at Mr. Murton. "Say, I'll bring in my prize lumbricus terrestris and show it to you tomorrow. Where do you live?"

"73 $\frac{1}{4}$ E Huntington Avenue," said Mr. Murton, in a breathless sort of way.

The man put his spectacles on again and smiled.

"I'll see you at noon," he said and went back to his magazine.

Mr. Murton climbed out of the cavern, covered his shaft with the orange crate, and went up to his small room.

The next day, Friday it was, Mrs. Tibbetts knocked on Mr. Murton's door.

"There's a man in uniform downstairs," she said.

"He wanted to know if a little man with glasses lived here." She looked dubiously at Mr. Murton. "You aren't very tall, and you do wear glasses," she said accusingly.

Mr. Murton hurried down the stairs. There was the man of the tortoise-shell rimmed spectacles. He had a black metal box in his hand with a wire-screen top.

"I brought the lumbricus terrestris," he smiled.

Mr. Murton's gentle face flushed with pleasure.

"Come up, sir; do come up," he said.

The spectacled man and he went to Mr. Murton's room together. The man had the afternoon off, he said; so they sat





together on the bed and watched lumbricus and Francesca and all the other earth worms.

The man's name was Kendrick Woodson, and he was about Mr. Murton's age. He told Mr. Murton he had been a train man for the Boston Subway for fifteen years. His rheumatism got so bad, however, from the tunnel draughts, that the doctor advised him to get some work indoors.

"But you know how it is," he said to Mr. Murton, "when you've been riding the tunnels for fifteen years. You get so you miss the silver streaks in the dark, and the humming of the wheels around the curves. I told the doctor. I said, 'Doc, my whole life's tied up in my lumbricus terrestris and the tunnel. I couldn't give up either.'"

Mr. Murton nodded sympathetically.

"What did you do?" he asked.

"Why," said Mr. Woodson, "I just got transferred to the job of lookout man. I'm indoors, you see, out of the dampness, but I can see the tracks and hear the wheels. All I have to do is watch to see the train goes through on schedule. The rest of the time I read. That was the Worm Fanciers' Guide I was reading yesterday," he explained.

Mr. Woodson asked Mr. Murton how he happened to become a worm fancier.

"It's company for me," Mr. Murton said wistfully.

Mr. Woodson put his blue-clad arm over Mr. Murton's slight shoulders.



"It's the most interesting study in the world, old man," he said.

He clapped Mr. Murton on the back.

"I've got to go along now, but I'll see you next Friday at four," he promised. "We'll have supper together at my place. I want to show you my collection. I have 1,260 choice specimens. Feed 'em on molassas and rags. It's the old-fashioned diet, but my worms like it more than the newspaper base, I find."

He shook hands with Mr. Murton.

"So long, Launcelot," he said. "See you Friday."

Mr. Murton wiped his glasses very carefully with the white pocket handkerchief which he kept for show in his breast pocket, and smiled happily.

"So long, Kendrick," said Mr. Murton. "I'll be waiting."





Little Miss Sligsby and the Muses

Aspasia Sligsby was a grayish maiden lady of fifty-eight. She had a many-windowed room on St. Botolph Street which she always thought of as her "studio".

Formerly she had been a Latin teacher in a select school for girls. She had read Ovid's Metamorphoses, translating the slightly juicy passages quietly to herself at night in eternal surprise at there being so much passion and pursuit in the world. Miss Sligsby could never imagine herself possessed by a love like that of poor Echo, nor could she ever visualize herself being chased by a cloven-hoofed god as gentle Syrinx had been. To be sure, often when walking from the classrooms to the dormitories at twilight, she would peer with her soft hazel eyes into the tall lilac hedge in case there should be a shaggy brown hide hidden there. But there never was. Sometimes Miss Sligsby wished there would be. Then she pictured to herself how she would defy the pagan god and perhaps convert him from his lecherous ways. This was when Miss Sligsby was young.

Now that her hair was gray, and her tiny figure frailer and more wraithlike than ever, she dreamt more delicate, less vigorous dreams. To understand these dreams of hers you would have to understand about Miss Sligsby's Muses.

In Miss Sligsby's "studio" there were eight wicker





baskets in a row under the three casement windows. If you didn't know Miss Sligsby and should step into her room by mistake, you might suppose the occupant to be one of the robust women of Erin who earn their bread by seeing that their neighbors are cleanly clad. But if you did know Miss Sligsby, however slightly, you knew that these could not be laundry baskets, and you might be puzzled as to their purpose. Then, one by one, the owners of the baskets would appear: the satiny black with diamond eyes from behind the screen concealing Miss Sligsby's stove; the arrogant, tawny orange from the sunny window sill; the tortoise shell Amazon from the fire-escape; the nunlike gray from Miss Sligsby's green studio couch; the white footed and breasted from the wine-colored chair near the fire place; the bobtailed Manx from the deep blue hassock before the bookshelves; the two sooty Angoras from upstairs.

If you asked Miss Sligsby what their names were, she would give her water nymph laugh and say, "The Muses." No one cat had a name of her own, for Miss Sligsby changed the individual names each day to suit the mood. Now there was a secret about Miss Sligsby and the cats that she never told anyone, and it was this:

There were eight cats and, of course, nine Muses. Every so often Miss Sligsby would let each cat be a different Muse, as I have said, just to keep them interested in life. Little Miss Sligsby herself would be the ninth Muse. She would reserve for herself the position of Melpomene, the Muse



tragedy, for example, or Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, or Polyhymnia, the Muse of the stately hymn.

Occasionally, on a Saturday, Miss Sligsby would become Clio, the Muse of history. Saturday always seemed a good factual day to her. When she was Clio, she arose at eight; had a serious, meditative breakfast of prune juice, grapenuts, and cocoa in a deep, blue cup; and read Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Wells until lunch time. Miss Sligsby enjoyed comparing Mr. Wells to Mr. Gibbon. She would eat a Spartan lunch of lettuce and cream cheese salad, and spend the afternoon at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, studying the sarcophagi in the ancient civilization rooms. She would have a thoughtful cinnamon toast and tea supper with perhaps an apple or pomegranate to stimulate her classical memory. After supper she would read the Odyssey or Coriolanus, or if she felt daring, one of young Mr. Anderson's historical plays. She was most fond of Valley Forge, although the presence of the women in the barracks disturbed her.

It was generally on a Thursday that she was Melpomene; that always seemed a tragic day to her. The very sound of Thursday brought the tears to her soft eyes. It was like an old Scandanavian wail.

On the day that she was Melpomene she would eat clove-studded ham and mashed turnip, and read Pelleas and Melisande or Oedipus Rex. She would read until late at night, using a pale yellow candle to see the page by, and wearing the







black velvet gown she had worn for the Little Theatre's presentation of Macbeth five years ago. As she read she would lightly finger the single heavy rope of rough pearls her father had brought back from one of his youthful voyages to the South Seas.

Once or twice Miss Sligsby had been Terpsichore, the Muse of dancing; then something strange happened so that she never became Terpsichore again.

One Wednesday night, after an exhausting day as Thalia, the Muse of comedy (the stories of Lewis Carroll in the morning, after a breakfast of gayly squirting grapefruit and puffed rice; the circus in the afternoon after a lunch of mock turtle soup and rabbit pie to finish off the Carroll morning; the most recent Disney Donald Duck followed by a late supper of waffles and honey, for Miss Sligsby had an excellent digestion, for all her frail appearance. This Wednesday night, as I say, as Miss Sligsby lay on her green studio couch, her curls done up in gayly colored rags instead of the usual white flannel ones, she heard the soft sound of one of the cats moving across the polished floor near the leaded windows.

Miss Sligsby sat up quietly and looked to see which cat it was. In the light of the Back Bay moon she could distinguish the dark body and white feet of the cat who had been Terpsichore that day. She became aware of a faraway tune and knew that Mr. Flanagan, the poet on the fifth floor, was fingering his flute softly in the night. Miss Sligsby watched

THE FIRST PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE  
LIFE OF THE LATE KING CHARLES THE FIRST  
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IN TWO VOLUMES  
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the white feet of the cat executing a graceful Eastern dance there in the moonlight. The black body dipped and swayed; the long soft tail curled and swung: the cat kept time to the elusive rhythm of Mr. Flanagan's flute.

Miss Sligsby was amazed. She had not realized the latent artistry of her white footed pet.

Mr. Flanagan played "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" and "The Rising of the Moon". Then he stopped. Miss Sligsby's cat stood upright for a moment, her tail draped gracefully over her right front leg, listening. Then she stepped daintily into her basket and lay down.

"Well," said Miss Sligsby to herself, "this is a surprising world." And she went to sleep.

From then on, however, the white footed cat was always Terpsichore. Miss Sligsby never changed her name again.

\* \* \* \*

It was the Friday that Miss Sligsby decided to try Erato, the Muse of love poetry, that it happened.

She had been reading Anacreontic lyrics all morning and was in a gay, friendly mood as she started out for lunch and the theatre in the early afternoon. She couldn't decide just where to eat. She had fed the other eight Muses their special Friday dish of salmon and tapioca sauce followed by a generous portion of top milk which, as Miss Sligsby smiled to herself, pleased them as much as nectar and ambrosia. She had





put on her soft rose crepe and brimmed velvet cap and her seed pearls, and now she was on her way downtown. It was quite a walk, but Miss Sligsby always enjoyed a bit of exercise, especially after a literary morning.

She was passing by the Personal Book Shop when she noticed a violet bound volume in the window with the golden word "Swinburne" on the back. That was all. Right next to the violet was a sturdy black and white cover proclaiming that in the following pages could be found the complete, unexpurgated account of Russia's advance on Finland. Miss Sligsby, hoping she looked like an avid reader of contemporary propaganda, pretended to be gazing at the black and white while secretly she had eyes only for the violet. Then, without even looking about to see that none of her D.A.R. acquaintances was near to see her moral downfall, she walked into the store and bought the violet book. She stole a glance or two at the inside pages before she tucked its violet length under her rose-clad arm, title concealed.

She decided she would try the Seville for lunch. It had a romantic sound. Feeling Iberian and mysterious, and ignoring her quaint Yankee appearance, she entered the Seville's Moorish doors. After she had selected a table near the orchestra and ordered her ministrone soup and her hot tomares, for Miss Sligsby had decided to go Latin in a big way, she looked up from her buttering of an especially crusty Roman roll and noticed, at the next table, a dapper little



gentleman in oxford grey regarding her steadfastly.

Little Miss Sligsby dropped her roll with a "ting!" on the heavy flowered plate. The roll bounced off and fell to the floor. With the quick, nimble movement of a butterfly catcher, the gentleman opposite hopped from his chair and retrieved the roll before the second bounce. Miss Sligsby watched his haloed gray head near her suede pumps in acute distress. A strange gentleman, and looking right at her ankles! Then the lavender edge of a slender volume in his side pocket caught her eye. She gasped.

The gentleman stood up and looked for perplexed minute at the hard roll in his hand.

"Bless my soul," he said, "I thought it was your purse."

He was most embarrassed.

Miss Sligsby looked at the size of the miniature bolster and decided the butterfly-catching gentleman didn't know much about women's tastes if he thought any woman would be content with a purse that size. Her own was large enough to accommodate two library cards, several free soap coupons, some hairpins, a pair of scissors, two emergency handkerchiefs in case of a sudden cold, snapshots of the Muses grouped and singly, and a small green book labeled My Thoughts.

"Thank you just the same," Miss Sligsby said, for she had a kind and perceptive heart. She smiled up into the gentleman's puzzled blue eyes.

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He had taken off his glasses to get a better look at the roll, and stood, glasses in one hand, roll in the other. Miss Sligsby gently took the roll from him and broke it into several pieces, putting the crumby fragments on her bread and butter plate.

"For you know, they might serve the roll to someone else, not knowing," she said, "and that would never do."

"Oh, never," agreed her new acquaintance most emphatically.

He stood beside her table for a few seconds without speaking, his left forefinger polishing the rim of his spectacles, his right stroking the lavender edge. Then he put his glasses on again, bowed shyly, and reseated himself at his own table.

All through the ministrone and the hot tamales, Aspasia Sligsby could feel the mild blue eyes of the roll-retrieving gentleman upon her softly flushed face. She didn't dare look at him, although she would have liked to: he had been so pleasant.

She left without desert, putting her dime for the waitress under the sugar bowl. She liked to think of the girl's surprise at finding the tip hiding, as it were.

Miss Sligsby went up Boylston Street to Tremont. Then she walked left up Tremont looking at the theatre signs carefully. She crossed down to Washington and examined the movies advertised there. She could have seen the bill in the Boston Transcript, which she always read most carefully so that



she could be sure she was not becoming too liberal and democratic in her political views, but it was more adventure-some to look at the pictures outside the theatre taken from the films being shown. She finally narrowed her choice down to I Met My Love Again at Loew's and Pride and Prejudice at Paramount's.

I Met My Love Again was illustrated out front by several romantic scenes. Miss Sligsby knew she would enjoy the picture. But then there was Miss Austen's story. Miss Sligsby had always felt herself to be rather like Elizabeth, sensible, not pretty (although, as I have mentioned before, she had also had dreams of a like long before the nineteenth century of Miss Austen, back in the Greece of satyrs and dryads). The pictures of Elizabeth and Mr. D'Arcy seemed very true to the originals. There was something about Mr. D'Arcy that reminded Miss Sligsby of the gentleman in the Seville. It wasn't his complexion or his features. Miss Sligsby decided it must be the earnest way in which he was looking at the cinema Elizabeth. Miss Sligsby felt a most Erato-like shiver run up her virgin back.

"One balcony," she said softly to the girl with the puffed goldfish cheeks who sat in the glass bowl.

There was a crowd waiting to get into the orchestra.

As Miss Sligsby climbed the stairs to the balcony she felt short quick steps on the carpet behind her. They followed her up the stairs, to the landing, around the circular







hole in the floor from which you could look down upon the heads of moviegoers below. Miss Sligsby began to feel like pursued Syrinx. She paused for a moment and looked down at the thin ribbons of scalp visible, all pointing north and south.

"My," thought Miss Sligsby, "I didn't know Miss Austen was so popular with the young people of today."

Miss Sligsby hadn't been told of Laurence Olivier's dark, sombre charm nor of the piquant arrogance of Greer Garson.

The usher, an efficient looking blond youth who looked as though he went to Boston University College of Business Administration daytimes, showed her courteously to a seat near the front as she requested. The footsteps still followed.

Miss Sligsby squeezed her apologetic way past a small girl with a lollipop which touched and clung for a moment to Miss Sligsby's soft hand and then was withdrawn for eating purposes.

Miss Sligsby sat down. A moment later, a gentleman entered from the opposite aisle saying, "Pardon me," and "I beg your pardon," to everyone as he passed. He sat down two seats from Miss Sligsby. It was the gentleman of the roll.

Miss Sligsby didn't know what to do.

"After all, he probably doesn't even remember me," she told herself modestly. Then suddenly she thought of his curly halo next to her suede pumps and tucked her feet away under the seat in terror lest he recognize them in the dark



somehow.

All through the war news, the previews showing a strange modern marital situation in which the young people slammed doors in one another's faces and a few moments later were seen frantically embracing one another on a street corner, and all through Miss Austen's story, Miss Sligsby had the strange feeling that the gentleman two seats from her was regarding her with interest. During the amusing scene in which Lady Catherine tricks Elizabeth into admitting her love for Mr. D'Arcy (although Miss Sligsby felt that Hollywood had no business tampering with Miss Austen's book so) she stole a smiling glance to her right. The mild blue eyes of her mysterious pursuer smiled back at Miss Sligsby. Once again she felt a strange pleasant sensation pass over her.

When the picture was over, Miss Sligsby started for the aisle, past the lollipop girl who evidently had a supply on hand, for the current delicacy was larger than it had been when Miss Sligsby had come in. Miss Sligsby knew the lollipop was larger because it pulled a larger area of skin on her hand as she passed.

Just as she turned the corner of the short aisle into the broad main aisle, she came face to face with her gentleman. Miss Sligsby, for the last three hours, had been thinking of him as "her" gentleman.

Now he bowed slightly, hat in hand. Miss Sligsby noticed how pertly his white handkerchief lifted its coned head

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold, crisp air. It felt like a fresh blanket after a long, hot summer. I took a deep breath, savoring the scent of pine and the distant sound of water. The world seemed so quiet, so peaceful. I walked along the path, my feet crunching on the dry leaves. The sun was just beginning to set, painting the sky in shades of orange and pink. I felt a sense of wonder and awe, as if I had discovered a hidden world. The path led me to a small stream, where I sat on a log and watched the water flow. The sound of the water was soothing, a gentle lullaby. I stayed there for hours, lost in thought and the beauty of the moment. The night came, and the stars appeared in the dark sky. I felt a sense of connection to the universe, a sense of belonging. The world was so beautiful, so full of life. I knew that this was a special moment, one that I would never forget. I stood up, feeling a sense of accomplishment and pride. I had made it, I had survived. I looked back at the path I had traveled, and I felt a sense of peace and contentment. The world was so beautiful, so full of life. I knew that this was a special moment, one that I would never forget.



from his breast pocket. Then she looked up into his eyes. There was something infinitely wistful about his eyes. Miss Sligsby longed to comfort him.

"I beg your pardon," he said.

Miss Sligsby smiled to encourage him.

"I beg your pardon," he said again, a little more loudly this time, "but it's such a dark night and so late and all-- May I see you to your home?"

Miss Sligsby's sense of humor made her smile a little at his concluding it was a dark night simply because the theatre lights were being turned out one by one. The gallantry of his proposal, however, pleased her.

"That would be most kind of you, Mr.----." She paused.

"Launcelot Murton," he said quickly and bowed his haloed head.

"--Mr. Murton," concluded Miss Sligsby firmly.

"I am Miss Aspasia Sligsby," she said as they started towards the stairs together.

"Aspasia," Mr. Murton said softly to himself, "Aspasia," as they walked boldly together past the C.B.A. boy, down the carpeted stairs, past the fish girl in her bowl, out to Washington Street.

Miss Sligsby looked at Mr. Murton and then at the picture of Mr. D'Arcy near the door. She was sure she was going to like Mr. Murton a great deal. She thought of the



Muses and knew they would like him too.

Side by side, with their two copies of the amorous Swinburne in pocket and under arm, they strolled down Washington Street, smiling shyly at each other now and then. Miss Sligsby seemed to hear Mr. Flanagan's flute, like the pipes of Pan, playing a few woodland trills in the distant night.





Mr. O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy

Kevin John Flanagan always referred to himself as Kevin O'Flanagan, since his father's name had been Kevin and his father's before him. Kevin, the grandfather, had been known in Cork as Kevin the Red; and young Kevin, the son, as Kevin the Dreamer. The grandson, had he stayed in Ireland, would probably have been called Kevin the Fluteplayer, but to his St. Botolph Street neighbors on the sooty side of Back Bay he was known simply as Mr. Flanagan, the poet on the fifth floor.

Kevin and Katie, his sister, had come to Boston to live with their lace-curtain-Irish relatives in Roxbury, in the Highlands, after Kevin the Dreamer had died, leaving nothing but six volumes' full of unpublished poems. Kevin the Dreamer had told his son all about the leprechauns and the Celtic wee folk. He had sung him the songs of Etain and Midir and their immortal love; and of Conaire Mor, the King of Ireland; and of Prince Bran, who visited the land of the immortals for hundreds of years. He had taught him all the misty, green beauty of the world of fancy and the dark secrets of Celtic lore.

When Timothy O'Halloran, Kevin and Katie's uncle and their guardian, was called to his reward personally by Saint Peter, the young Flanagans took rooms in the house of the stone lions on St. Botolph Street. Kevin read his Gaelic myths and studied his Ogham, and Katie grew more blue-eyed



and white-skinned every saint's day that passed.

All the people in the Armory end of St. Botolph Street and a few of the geniuses who dwelled on Irvington, Garrison, and Huntington Avenue knew the Flanagans. Katie they always referred to as that good-looking Flanagan girl, and Kevin John, as Flanagan, the poet on the fifth floor.

Just where he had first got the name of poet it would be hard to say. Certainly no epic signed Kevin John Flanagan had ever appeared in companionship with Stephen Vincent Benet in the Atlantic Monthly, nor had any obscure word pattern with a modest kjf at the end been printed along with the embryos from other brilliant young minds in Poetry: a Magazine of Verse. Mr. Flanagan never even gave Edgar Guest a run for his money, as a matter of fact.

Since the title of poet quite definitely did not arise from productive effort, its source must, of necessity, have been O'Flanagan's appearance and his living habits.

Who but a poet, argued his neighbors, would play the flute in the middle of the night and charm Miss Sligsby's cats on the first floor? Who but a poet would lean out of his fifth-story window and give the call of the Tara banshee every time a storm came up? Or have a huge Irish wolfhound named Shamus O'Brien O'Sullivan Magillicuddy for a roommate? Who indeed?

And then there were his clothes. Of course, many men wear black overcoats, but few if any have red flannel





linings put into them and into the pockets to keep their hands warm. And many men have trouble with their feet and enjoy walking about the house without shoes, but who but a poet would go down to Sawyer's Drug Store, shoeless, in bright green socks, and give no other explanation as to his conduct besides wishing everyone a happy Saint Patrick's Day?

No, Mr. Kevin O'Flanagan was a poet. There was no doubt about it in the minds of the members of the select art aristocracy of St. Botolph Street and environs.

The peculiar thing was the fact that Mr. O'Flanagan, aside from his eccentricities, during certain hours of each day, was, by financial necessity, occupied in a lucrative, even a respectable calling. Mr. O'Flanagan was an officer of the law.

Now O'Flanagan and Shamus O'Brien O'Sullivan Magillicuddy had lived in fraternal peace in Mrs. Santenelli's rooming house for five happy years, ever since O'Flanagan's sister, Katie, had given up her fine job in the State House to marry the mad Mahoney and go traveling around the states with him, spending the fortune his father, the honorable Dennis Mahoney, (God rest his soul. He was a good man.) had acquired during twenty years of active political life. Since Katie had left O'Flanagan alone, as I say, he had lived at the home of Mrs. Santenelli (nee Lizo Donoughue), getting his own meals on a dirty gas plate behind the huge chest of drawers which Mrs. Santenelli's brother Bilge had given her for a Christmas present one year. Mrs. Santenelli's brother Bilge worked hard



on a fishing boat all week long, and on Sundays and holidays he took a vacation from his fishing by doing carpentry. Mrs. Santenelli's house on St. Botolph Street was filled with useful umbrella stands and one-drawer tables. The chest of drawers was the work of an artist, and now and then O'Flanagan would look at the particles of fried egg and the coffee stains splattered on its dovetailed back and make a note that he should, in all justice to its elegant air, put some oilcloth up. He never could remember to buy any, however, and the Magillicuddy wasn't much at reminding him either.

The Magillicuddy and he had become friends the day Katie went off with the mad Mahoney. O'Flanagan had been walking through Boston Common in his uniform, looking brisk and efficient, when he had seen a huge wolfhound standing dejectedly beside a tall, dark woman in black Russian boots and a long black fur cape, who held a twelve-inch cigarette holder in her left hand, from which extended a long Russian cigarette. The woman was talking to a tall, dark man in a long black overcoat and a black fur hat.

When they saw O'Flanagan approaching, they turned to meet him, and the man asked him the way to Jordan Hall. It seemed they were going to a lecture on Pushkin. They were very friendly, and O'Flanagan enjoyed talking to them.

He asked the woman if she intended to take the wolfhound to the lecture, and she said, Yes, she thought Dmitri Petrofsky would enjoy hearing the Russian poetry of his home-





land and the songs.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said O'Flanagan, "but sure you're not thinking that's a Russian dog, are you?"

"Of course he is," said the booted lady in a surprised voice, which had a strong Semitic accent. "I bought him from the head groom of the Czar, who said he was sired by Lanislauski, the Czar's favorite dog. And besides, he must be Russian, for he never smiles."

O'Flanagan took off his cap and scratched his head. Then he took another look at the sad-faced wolfhound. The wolfhound looked earnestly back. He looked at O'Flanagan's black curly hair and his bright blue eyes and his freckles. An expression of kinship came into his mournful eyes. Then he put back his shaggy head, gave a short, wistful bark, and smiled up at Kevin John.

The booted lady regarded the smile with surprise. It was clear she was seeing her Dmitri Petrovsky in a new light. Then O'Flanagan pulled his flute from his back pocket and played the tune to:

"Have ye iver bin to an Irishman's shanty,  
Where whiskey is plinty, and water is scanty--"

a song which he had not been taught by his cut-glass-Irish relatives.

That wolfhound began to caper around the pigeons like Paddy O'Flynn doing the jig. When he had finished, O'Flanagan turned to the two Russians.

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"Sure, 'tis and Irish wolfhound you have here, ma'am," he said respectfully, but convincingly. "I'll give you thirty dollars for him. He's a fine dog, I can see."

The two Russians talked together in Russian for about five minutes with much shrugging of shoulders and waving of cigarette holders. Meanwhile, the wolfhound walked over to O'Flanagan while they weren't looking and whispered:

"Would ye be playin' us anither tune, lad?"

O'Flanagan played "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" and the wolfhound shook a tear from his shaggy, lashed eye.

Finally the Russians decided they had no use for an Irish wolfhound; so O'Flanagan acquired a good friend to replace his sister, Katie.

He changed Dmitri's name to Shamus O'Brien O'Sullivan Magillicuddy, and a happier dog you couldn't find in the whole great city of Boston.

Five years after Shamus had come to live with O'Flanagan, on a certain day in July, O'Flanagan was celebrating his twenty-seventh birthday. Early that morning he had smoothed out his blankets and those of the Magillicuddy, for they shared the bed, Kevin at the head, Shamus at the foot, tossed off two quarts of milk and six raised sugar doughnuts, giving the Magillicuddy three cans of Redheart to keep him from seizing the doughnuts, put on his black silk tie and his aesthetic expression, which he usually kept for the evening, and sallied





forth. The St. Botolph Street wind, practicing to become a Huntington Avenue gale, whipped O'Flanagan's hyacinthine locks about and almost tore from his arm the large green cardboard box he carried.

He proceeded on his way until he came to a dark-red brick building. There was no sign of life; the building was apparently unoccupied. Kevin John Flanagan, however, was undaunted. He tried the unpolished knob of the great door, found it turned, and entered.

He walked down a long corridor and into a dimly lighted room at the end. In the very center of this room at the back there was a high desk. A large, fatherly looking man with red cheeks and a bald head slept peacefully in a throne-like chair. On the desk before him lay a brightly covered magazine. O'Flanagan could not see the name of the magazine because of the height of the desk.

To the left of the red-cheeked man, over near the window, there were five, round, comfortable chairs and in them slept five, large, fatherly looking men with red cheeks and bald heads. Their hands were clasped loosely on their comfortable bellies, and the streak of light from the dusty window showed them breathing easily in unison. It was a pleasant, restful scene.

O'Flanagan cleared his throat slightly. Immediately, the fatherly man at the high desk sat up and began writing busily in a large black book which he shisked from the long



drawer before him, with his right hand, meanwhile stealthily removing from sight the brightly covered magazine, with his left. O'Flanagan saw it was the latest issue of Bar Z Ranch Stories. Immediately, the five fatherly men in the round chairs by the window sat up and assumed expressions of vigilance and stern devotion to duty.

"Captain Horgan, sir," said Kevin John Flanagan, "it's only me."

"Oh, it's you; is it, Flanagan?" asked the first fatherly man, looking down at him. "Why didn't you say so?"

"Sure, I just did, Captain," said O'Flanagan.

"Well. Well," said the captain, "and why aren't you in your uniform? Taking the day off to go gallivanting about, are you?"

"Captain Horgan," said Kevin John Flanagan, "It's all my days I'm taking off. I'm retiring."

"Retiring!" bellowed the captain in a wounded tone. You could see that Kevin had hurt his feelings. "Flaherty, Shanihan, McCarthy, Callahan, Shea--young Flanagan's leaving us. Do you mind that?" He addressed the five guardians of the state seated near the window.

Flaherty raised **his** bulk from the round chair and came over to the desk. Shanihan, McCarthy, Callahan, and Shea followed.

"Why, Kevin," said Flaherty, "you can't do that, man. Sure, what would the city of Boston be doing if the Irish





desert her? Who'd defend us all from the foreign element? Did you think of that?"

"It's for no light reason I'm leaving, Mr. Flaherty," said Kevin John Flanagan. I'm going off to the country to write some fine poems. As for the city of Boston, Mr. Flaherty, it's for her sake as well as my own I'm retiring. Sure, what kind of a guardian against wickedness am I, with my thoughts on the little folk and the fairy rings in the green fields, and the leprechauns drinking the dew from the white rose petals. Why, you could murder a man in cold blood before my very own eyes and I wouldn't be seeing you. It's a poet I'd be, Mr. Flaherty. You can give my uniform to the boys."

He opened the green cardboard box and took from it his blue uniform and his stout night stick.

"It's a happy five years I've spent on the force though, and a finer lot of men I couldn't find if I looked a million years. You're my good friends, all of you, and you needn't think I'll ever be forgetting the times we've had together, the mornings we spent in Jacko Mulligan's pool room and the nights in the back of Thrasher O'Casey's drugstore, talking away so friendly and nice. A man couldn't ask for better friends than you, Shanahan, Callahan, McCarthy, Shea, and Flaherty, nor a finer chief than you, Captain Michael Horgan, always ready to help a man when he's in need, always giving the encouraging word. But I'm going to be a poet. I've made up my mind."

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"Well, Kevin," said the captain, "'tis a fine thing to be a poet. Wasn't my own mother's father the best singer of songs that Galway ever had? Go write your poems, my lad. The boys'll be missing you, though, I'm thinking. You know you always have friends in Boston and glad we'll be to see you back any time you change your mind."

"Good luck to you, now, Kevin John," said Mr. Flaherty.

"We'll be missing you, Flanagan," said Callahan, Shanahan, McCarthy, and Shea.

"Good luck, Kevin Flanagan," said Captain Horgan.

- "Good luck to you all," said Kevin John Flanagan, and he walked out of the room with the dusty windows, down the dim corridor, into the sunshine.

That was in the morning. By noon, O'Flanagan had packed his two straw suitcases, taken his nine hundred and eighty-five dollars and thirty-two cents from the National Shawmut Bank, North Street Branch, and with his flute case under his arm and with Shamus O'Brien O'Sullivan Magillicuddy on a leash, he was on his way. He and Shamus had said goodbye to Mrs. Santenelli, their landlady, to Miss Aspasia Sligsby, their friend on the first floor, and to Lullaby Murdock, the short-order cook next door.

O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy walked up Irvington Street to Huntington Avenue and paused before a shop whose dim windows were inhabited by twelve ivory elephants of gradually





increasing or diminishing size, depending on which way you were going; a large, unevenly cut glass prism; a wooden statue of the Buddha hugging his knees in pain, as if attacked by green apple cramps; and a sea of black velveteen gathered in artistic waves here and there. The gold letter on the window read: "Madame Minerva, psychologist and palmist. Advice on love, marriage, business, and all affairs pertaining to life."

Mr. Flanagan walked in. A bell above the door tinkled, and immediately there was the sound of unseen footsteps as if some force of the other world were approaching. Mr. Flanagan rested his two suitcases on the floor and waited. The purple curtain at the back of the shop was pulled aside and a tall red-headed woman entered. She wore several strands of metal and glass beads and four or five glittering rings. Her appearance otherwise was quite normal, and her face and hands were clean and freckled. Her hair showed red to the scalp. The lady evidently was no imposter.

"Well, Kevin," said Madame Minerva, "and what might you be doing with them two big suitcases? Sure, you look as though you're going on your honeymoon."

"No honeymoon, Mamie," said Kevin O'Flanagan. "I've retired. I'm going to the country to be a poet. I've come to say goodbye to you."

"Goodbye, Kevin Flanagan," said Madame Minerva. "And an elegant poet you're bound to be, too. Sure, wasn't your own mother an O'Halloran and wasn't it the O'Halloran who

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won Bridget the Fair with his beautiful songs? --Even if I do say it myself, and me with the name of O'Halloran."

"Goodbye, Mamie," said Kevin O'Flanagan. "It's a good friend you've always been to me, ever since I was a lad."

"Goodbye, Kevin Flanagan," said Madame Minerva.

O'Flanagan walked out of the shop, leaving the tinkling of the little bell behind him and waited for the street car. Down the long track between Mechanics Hall and the different small dining places labeled "Tables for ladies," and "No women or minors allowed," according to the whims of the proprietors and their liquor facilities, the street car came, bearing the sign of "Subway Francis". Kevin hailed it and got on. He dropped his dime in the slot and tried to make his way down the car. The front was blocked by a silent but active horde of old ladies of seemingly frail appearance who jabbed him with their ancient protruding bones as he passed.

"Holy Saint Joseph! but some of these old biddies have the powerful limbs," said Kevin O'Flanagan to himself. "It's not safe for a man to travel these days without his grandmother to protect him."

He pushed and tugged the Magillicuddy up the aisle past the dangerous old ladies to a haven of relatively gentle football players.

He and Shamus and the flute and the suitcases established themselves in a corner and waited for Park Street to arrive. At Park they gave the powerful old ladies adequate





time to vacate the car and then stepped off themselves.

O'Flanagan looked about carefully to see which way the old ladies were going. He spotted them in a superannuated bevy near the newsstand watching with predatory eyes the approaching Lechmere car. Kevin John decided he would try the subway. It might take a bit longer, but he'd be safe from the old ladies.

"Coming from cooking school, I suppose," said O'Flanagan to himself. "The devil take them, I'm glad I don't have to eat anything they'd cook. Sure, those powerful arms would whale the life out of any cake, I'd say."

He and Shamus and the flute and the suitcases took the subway one stop to Washington and walked up the long stairs to Summer Street. The Magillicuddy was all for using the escalator marked Chauncy Street and only by taking out his flute and piping a few bars of "Along the Peat Road" could O'Flanagan lure him away from the Chauncy Street exit over to the stairs.

O'Flanagan noticed that several people seemed to be watching them as they passed.

"The curiosity of the vulgar," said O'Flanagan to Shamus. "Sure, you'd think they'd never seen an Irish gentleman and his dog before, what with their eyes popping out of their silly faces."

They waited for the Everett train at Summer Street. Then they encountered another difficulty. The trainman, a low



creature of the worst sort (obviously without an ounce of Celtic blood in him), refused to let the Magillicuddy on the train. The trainman had a swarthy look and a thick black moustache. O'Flanagan had to hold the Magillicuddy tightly by the leash so he wouldn't knock the dark one down.

"Well," said O'Flanagan to the trainman, "that's what comes of letting foreigners into Boston. An Irish poet and gentleman can't take his dog with him in the Elevated Train. We'll see what His Honor the Mayor has to say to this."

He led Shamus out into the street and they started off in the direction of the North Station. Shamus got tired on the way and sat down to rest; so O'Flanagan put his two suitcases together and sat down too, companionably.

The Magillicuddy looked about to see if there were anyone near. There were people passing by at the intersections, but he and Kevin John were all alone on Merchants' Row.

"Let's have a tune, Kevin John," whispered the Magillicuddy.

"What'll it be, Shamus O'Brien?" asked Kevin John.  
"'The Rising of the Moon' perhaps?"

The Magillicuddy smiled and wagged agreement. Kevin John took up his flute and started very softly to play "The Rising of the Moon". A large blue figure appeared from the intersection.

"And who do you think you are?" asked an ironic voice.

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O'Flanagan looked up from his flute playing and recognized Flaherty.

"Well, Flaherty," he said, "I'm on my way."

"Oh, it's you, is it, Kevin John?" said Flaherty. "I couldn't tell who it was what with that big slob of a dog taking up all the sunlight. Where did you ever get him? I haven't seen his like since I left Kerry."

"Where I got the Magillicuddy is a longer story than I've time to be telling now, Mr. Flaherty," said Kevin John. "I'm on my way to the country. I'd be on the train now if it weren't for the foreigners in the city," he said, thinking of the swarthy trainman.

He told Flaherty about the Magillicuddy and the incident at Summer Street Station.

"What if they won't let Shamus on the train to the country?" he asked. "A man can't be walking that far."

"I'll be seeing he takes the train with you, Kevin John," said Flaherty assuringly.

"The holy saints will reward you, Mr. Flaherty," said Kevin John.

He put his flute in the case and he and the Magillicuddy and the two suitcases and Mr. Flaherty walked to North Station. O'Flanagan bought a one-way ticket to Twin Elms, New Hampshire. He had picked the name at random from the train boards.

"That sounds like real country, Mr. Flaherty," he

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said. "I'll be writing my poetry in no time at all."

Flaherty put them all on the train safely, wished them good luck, and left.

The Magillicuddy squeezed his long body on the seat opposite O'Flanagan and went to sleep, moving his front paws as if running a race with the train. Every once in a while his paws would stop; he would put back his lean head and give a short low howl. Then he would resume his motionless race. Every time he howled the other passengers would gaze about fearfully, and not seeing his form low in the seat, they would go back to their Movie Romances and Detective Stories, and the few pseudo-intellectuals to their Reader's Digest, with shaking hands and quivering eyelids.

O'Flanagan looked out the window as the train pulled out from the station, and watched the long tracks and the other trains zigzagging about. It looked like the toyshop of Jordan Marsh at Christmas time. Then, deciding there was no poetic inspiration to be had from such a scene, he too went to sleep. Every time the Magillicuddy gave his low howl, O'Flanagan would answer with a dreamy "Whist". The other passengers spent their time looking about in a thoroughly frightened manner.

Conductors came and went and O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy slept on. Then the trainman woke Kevin John and told him the next stop was Twin Elms, New Hampshire.

O'Flanagan stumbled down the car, a suitcase in each hand. Shamus carried the flute in his mouth, his eyes





still shut. They got into a bit of a difficulty at the door. The Magillicuddy tried to carry the flute through the locked door lettered WOMEN and O'Flanagan had to pinch him to make him open his eyes and watch where he was going. Finally he and the Magillicuddy and the flute and the suitcases were safe on the ground.

A fat man in black with a strip of white showing around his middle seized the bags, the flute, and O'Flanagan, and deposited them all quickly and expertly in a large black car. O'Flanagan barely had time to pull the drowsy Magillicuddy into the back seat with him before the car started.

"Where to, Bud?" the fat man called back as he rolled out of the depot.

"I'm looking for a place to board for a while," said O'Flanagan.

"I'll take ya to Twimbleys'," said the fat man, and off they went.

In about twenty minutes, they drove into a large yard with four big oak trees at the entrance. On one of the oak trees was a sign reading "Four Oaks"; on another, a sign reading "Guests Acomidated". The other two trees supported a rope hammock.

O'Flanagan with his flute and the Magillicuddy followed the fat man who was carrying the two suitcases into the front hall through the screen door. The Magillicuddy sniffed about and almost fainted when he looked up and found

the first part of the year, the weather was very  
warm, and the crops were growing well. The  
second part of the year was very dry, and the  
crops were suffering. The third part of the year  
was very wet, and the crops were suffering.  
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himself nose to nose with a large deer head covering a stove-pipe hole. The deer head looked steadily down with its cheerful brown eyes without uttering a sound and the Magillicuddy regained his composure somewhat when he realized it was bodiless.

"Mis Twim-bleys--" called out the fat man.

They waited for a few minutes in silence. Then a large woman in a purple-and-green flowered dress came down the stairs.

She and the fat man appeared to be good friends. O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy watched them jolly one another along.

The fat man told Mis Twimbleys she looked prettier than ever in her new dress, and Mis Twimbleys laughed and said he'd better not be talking that way at his age.

The fat man introduced O'Flanagan and left regretfully, saying he had to get back to the depot.

"How long are ya plannin' on stayin', Mr. Flanagan?" asked Mis Twimbleys.

"I'm not sure, ma'am," said Kevin John, figuring he might want to build himself a little house in a few weeks.

"Well," said Mis Twimbleys, "I kin give ya the Front Room. Of course, it ain't fancy, but it's clean, and there's plenty of cupboard space," she added, eyeing the suitcases. She looked unbelievably at the Magillicuddy's size. "I s'pose ya kin keep ya dog in the barn. He don't care where he sleeps so long as it's comf'table, I bet." She

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laughed heartily at her own joke.

Kevin John, a little puzzled by this display of humorless Yankee wit, laughed too, politely.

"That will be fine, ma'am," said Kevin John.

He moved his bags upstairs and unpacked. Then he sat down in the velvet-seated wooden rocker and looked about his room. Over the bed there was a large, oblong, black and white engraving of a huge stag standing on the crest of a hill. It was a younger, more virile representative of the species than the gentle animal who filled in the stove-pipe hole downstairs. Between the two side windows there was a square picture of an Indian maid of marvellously white skin and dark, limpid, Latin eyes. She wore a shapeless leather garment, double-fringed, a brightly beaded pair of moccasins, and a red feather. She sat by a rushing waterfall and gazed sadly across the flung spray. In large, black letters below the waterfall was the title: "THE INDIANMAID WAITS FOR THE RETURN OF THE YOUNG BRAVE." There was also a burnt-wood tie rack, with the simple words: "Paley's Pond" distinguishing it, a birchbark canoe commanding one to visit the Flume, and a green and red sampler which counselled the reader that "A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED."

Everything was very neat. The flowered curtain that partially concealed the wire hangers and hooks in one corner was faded but clean. The three white linen hand towels on the left of the maple washstand hung small and stiff. There was a small square of soap on a blue and green flowered dish, which



was evidently the last member of a decadent china set. There was a large red-flowered water pitcher and bowl to match. O'Flanagan walked over to examine the stand more carefully. The soap had a strong perfumed odor. There were four-petalled white flowers painted on the front of the washstand. There was also a small doorknob which O'Flanagan pulled in curiosity. Within was the third piece of the red-flowered crockery set.

"Will you take a look, Shamus," said Kevin John. "Sure, it's just like the one old Aunt Maggie used to keep under her bed."

Besides the rocker, the washstand, and the wall decorations, there was a large wooden bed. It was hard and had no blankets, but there were several patchwork quilts. There was a crazy quilt instead of a spread, and another quilt, Martha Washington, Mis Twimbleys later told him proudly, at the foot. The two pillow cases had heavy lace at the open ends and contained two, hard, oblong objects.

"Now, let's take a look at your room, Shamus," said Kevin John.

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, the Magillicuddy and O'Flanagan lived at the Twimbleys' for two long weeks. Every morning they would rise at six, eat a hearty breakfast with the family, and go for a walk in the woods. O'Flanagan watched for a telltale fairy





ring or a small footstep in the moss or a thread of melody from a green grass pipe. He and the Magillicuddy would walk softly along, peeping under the low branches of the pine trees and lifting the lily-of-the-valley leaves. But not one leprechaun did they see.

After a substantial noonday dinner of Green Mountain potatoes, Rhode Island Red chicken, Yellow Danvers carrots, and fresh string beans cut the long way, followed by wild-strawberry shortcake, O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy would set out again. They would sit on the mossy banks of Whittleseed's Creek and watch the minnows shimmering by and smell the hay on one side of them and the pine trees on the other. O'Flanagan would hold his paper and pencil in readiness for an inspiration, and the Magillicuddy would sit on his haunches and stare earnestly into O'Flanagan's eyes.

Now and then Christine, the Dutch Belted cow, would come down the path from the pasture in pursuit of the delicate scent that denoted the Magillicuddy was near. Christine had fallen in love with the Magillicuddy the first day, when she had seen him loping across the hayfields after a cricket. She would stand behind Kevin John and chew her cud flirtatiously at the Magillicuddy and switch her tail in invitation. The Magillicuddy would eye her sleek black and white appearance distantly and then return to his collaborative poetic concentration. For hours they would stay thus: Kevin John, dreaming his elusive dreams; the Magillicuddy, watching Kevin



John; Christine, trying to lure the Magillicuddy with her bovine wiles.

At fifteen minutes of six, O'Flanagan would put away his paper and pencil and he and the Magillicuddy would go back to Twimbleys' for supper, Christine gazing reproachfully at the Magillicuddy as he left. They would eat a delicious salad composed of Sliced Earliana tomatoes, leaves of Boston lettuce, and Scarlet Globe radishes cut in flowers, followed by baked Red Astrakan apples, glazed with yellow Guernsey cream.

In the evening he and Shamus would sit out front in the rope hammock and watch the stars and think of Deirdre of the Sorrows and of the pain of Iseut of Ireland when she became the wife of Mark, loving Tristram as she did. O'Flanagan would think of all the lovely lost ladies of Celtic legend, and of the blinding beauty of Bridget the Fair of the Isles, but not one verse of his own would come to his head.

Sometimes he and Shamus would give up the waiting for the poetry to come to them and would sit in the parlor on a horsehair sofa and play checkers with Mr. Alton Huntress, who occupied an indefinable position at Four Oaks. Mr. Huntress obviously was not a summer boarder. Nor was he a blood relation of Mis Twimbleys. He had been a friend of her husband's and he owned the farm next to Twimbleys'. O'Flanagan had also met a Mrs. Huntress and several younger Huntresses who were friendly enough with Mr. Huntress but did not seem to know him very well. O'Flanagan rather liked Mr. Huntress. He had a





stock of amusing anecdotes to while away the times between checker moves.

As a matter of fact O'Flanagan liked Mis Twimbleys and the fresh vegetables and fruits too. He liked having nothing to do but to watch the sun go up and down. It was all very pleasant, but somehow, as he told the Magillicuddy one morning while they sat by Whittleseed's Creek, somehow the country was a great disappointment to him.

He began to miss the indigestible eggs cooked behind Bilge's chest of drawers; he missed throwing his banana skins into the wastebasket after supper; he missed the peanuts and gumdrops he and the Magillicuddy used to eat for desert of an evening. He decided to go home to his books and his dreams.

On the ninth day of August O'Flanagan and the Magillicuddy and the flute arrived at Mrs. Santenelli's. They had sent the two suitcases by Parcel Post the night before for forty cents a piece.

Mrs. Santenelli greeted them with fat outstretched arms. Kevin gave her a big kiss and she gave him a playful slap. She showed him up to his old room. She had unpacked his suitcases for him and everything was in its proper place. There stood Lullaby Murdock over by the window playing "The Harp That Once through Tara's Halls" on his bagpipes. Miss Sligsby had picked a few last roses branches in the Public Gardens when no one had been around. These were on the chest of drawers next to the volume of Irish charms which Kevin always



kept beside his bed, in case the St. Botolph Street banshee should appear to him in the night. (The Magillicuddy said he had seen her several times.) Miss Slibsby's eight cats were all there in clean fresh bows to welcome the Magillicuddy who barked madly as, forgetting his great size, he tried to roll about on the floor and succeeded in knocking down the picture of St. Cecilia which hung over the bed. Bilge was there with a present of fish for O'Flanagan's supper. It was a happy homecoming.

The very next day O'Flanagan went down to the red-brick building and was welcomed back to the force by Captain Horgan, who said the motorists of Boston had been writing in for the last two weeks asking what had happened to the policeman who left a poetic reminder instead of a ticket for the first offender.

The very next night he and Shamus sat by the window in the dark playing the flute and watching the stars shine over St. Botolph Street. And thinking of the long avenue with its two streams of traffic going to and from Boston, and hearing the pleasant city rumble of the streetcars and the trains pulling into Back Bay Station, the words of a song began to sing themselves in O'Flanagan's head, and he started to write his poem.

On December the thirtieth, four months after his return from the green field of Four Oaks, Twin Elms, New Hampshire, Kevin John Flanagan published his first poetry in





the Atlantic Monthly. It was titled simply St. Botolph Street Blues, and the critics declared it was the great American epic.

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### The Rival Janitors

For twenty-two years the residents of Back Bay's elegant apartment house, The St. Botolph Street Manor, had had the good fortune to be the recipients of janitorial services par excellence. For twenty-two years Mr. Jamieson Jenks had seen that his tenants were warm in winter (there was nothing he could do about the Boston summers); that their faucets and pipes were responsive to the touch of the early morning bather; that their windows were looked after so that there was not a rattle in the building; that their garbage and refuse was whisked away from their back doors the minute after it was placed there; that their rooms were painted and papered whenever it was necessary--and all this with a willingness and cheer that did a tenant's heart good to see.

In brief, Mr. Jamieson Jenks was the Ideal Janitor. He loved his work and he did it well. His father, Jonathan, his grandfather, Jesse, and his three older brothers, Jerome, Joshua, and Jared, had all been janitors, and good ones too. Mr. Jamieson Jenks was the last of a long line of Ideal Janitors. He was proud of his heritage.

Mr. Jenks was like the fish-crier in Sandburg's poem, whose face was that of a man terribly glad to be selling fish. Mr. Jamieson Jenks' face was that of a man terribly glad to be doing the small services which constituted his job. His step was always so sprightly and his conversation and





manner so jovial that the seventy-nine odd tenants of The St. Botolph Street Manor habitually referred to him as the Jolly Janitor.

Mr. Jenks had started his janitorial work when he was eighteen. He was forty-two now and a past master of it. Mr. Jamieson Jenks was of the old school; he was a nineteenth-century janitor. The title of janitor he wore with pride, and there was family tradition apparent in the certain little ways in which he did everything.

Other men might slosh about miserably during the winter months, sorrowfully shoveling the seven or eight inches of snow that had fallen during the night. Other men might drearily dig the small lawn gardens, desperately trying to ignore the summer sun on their wet backs. Not Mr. Jamieson Jenks.

When winter came, and he awoke one morning to see the white softness outside his window, his brown eyes would crinkle at the corners in anticipation. He would brush the two remaining red curls on his freckled scalp, get his solitary breakfast briskly, wrap himself warmly in quantities of sweaters knit by his female cousins, the two Jamieson sisters, Miss Lettie and Miss Lutie, and, putting his snow shovel over his right shoulder in a pert, military fashion, he would march forth early in the morning before other janitors had even opened their eyes.

He would shovel rhythmically and happily, even



singing a bit, accenting his words to the soft "thush" of the snow as it dropped softly from his shovel over on the white lawn. As soon as he saw the various husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, and other males of no apparent connection coming out the two frontdoors on their way to work, he would quickly finish clearing the walk, singing happily to himself. Then, shovel on shoulder, he would march back to his janitorial suite and prepare for the after-breakfast garbage collecting.

In summer he would spade the brown soil gently and lift the few tiny crocuses and daffodils into place with caressing fingers. He would pat the soil and forget the hot sun in his interest in his work.

Thus Mr. Jamieson Jenks lent an air of distinction to his duties. He reveled in work and he awoke each morning with a jolly smile on his round face.

Mr. Jenks liked everyone and everyone liked him. He was an easy-going, pleasant-tempered man, and very rarely did he become upset. When Lullaby Murdock, the short order cook who lived at Mrs. Santenelli's boarding house on St. Botolph Street, and who was a very good friend of Mr. Jamieson Jenks, came over one evening to tell him that his friend, Old Man Barrett, the janitor at the Irvington Arms, was retiring, Mr. Jenks was upset. Lullaby explained that Old Man Barrett was too busy to come down himself, what with breaking in a new janitor and all, but that he would see Jamieson to say goodbye to him before he left for Philadelphia to live with his





married daughter, Gertrude.

The next day Old Man Barrett, dressed in his best, came to say goodbye. Jamieson was very sorry to see Mr. Barrett go. Mr. Barrett had been the janitor at the Irvington Arms in Jonathan Jenks' time. He had been known as Kippy Barrett then. He was close to eighty now, and had had to have a helper for the last ten years. Now he was going to take his life, the remaining twenty years of it, easy. (Every one in Old Man Barrett's family hit the hundred mark before he died.) Jamieson wondered what the new janitor was like. He had not long to find out.

One Thursday evening (it was early summer and the air was pleasantly cool after the hot day) Jamieson dressed his plump self in his brown-checked suit and the burnt-orange tie which went so well with his shining brown eyes, and jocularly set out to visit Mr. Barrett's successor.

He approached the Irvington Arms with a jaunty step and went around back to the semi-subterranean suite that had formerly been Old Man Barrett's. A long, lank man with sad grey eyes and a bang of black hair sat on the low cement wall leading to the cellar. He was only about thirty-one or so, Mr. Jenks discovered later, but he had a careworn eye. He was dressed in a dark blue shirt and tie and dark blue trousers, and he was occupied in probing his teeth sorrowfully with a toothpick.

"How do, Captain," cried Jamieson Jenks. Jamieson



always addressed strangers as Captain. It gave them a brisk, cheerful feeling as a rule, he had found. The lank stranger, however, did not seem at all elevated from his gloom by the gratuitous military title. He kept probing his left eye-tooth remorselessly with the toothpick as if digging the weeds out of a petunia bed. His left hand was raised and lowered listlessly in what Mr. Jamieson Jenks benevolently interpreted as a greeting.

"My name's Jenks. Janitor of the St. Botolph Street Manor. Glad to know you, sir," Jamieson cried heartily.

"S. Samuel Souders," said the lank one. His voice had a sepulchral tone.

"D'ja think you're going to like your job, Saunders?" asked Jamieson, still determining to be jolly.

"Souders," said the lank one. "Not Saunders, or Sanders, or Sindere. Souders." He enunciated the name very carefully, giving the first syllable a true pork-like sound.

"S-O-U-D-E-R-S. Sowwders."

"D'ja think you'll like your job here, Mr. Souders?" asked Jamieson Jenks. His voice had lost a bit of its customary effervescence.

"Yes," said Mr. Souders.

There was a silence.

Jamieson tried again.

"Irvington Manor's a fine place. Fine class of people. Old Man Barrett always used to say they were the





friendliest people he'd ever seen, always laughing and joking with him when he went up in the morning to empty the waste baskets."

Mr. Saunders continued his probing. Jamieson began to feel a bit of a draught chilling his usual jocularly.

"Well, Mr. Souders. Pleasure to make your acquaintance. Drop over and see me some evening. Glad to see you any time," he ended dispiritedly as Souders' face did not change.

"Good evening to you, Mr. Souders," he said, and, tucking his burnt-orange tie into the breast of his brown-checked suit, he hustled away from the doorway that had once been cheered by the white head of Old Man Barrett and by the intriguing whisper of his voice gossiping away about the tenants.

The next night Lullaby Murdock dropped in for a game of checkers.

"Have you seen the sign?" he inquired mysteriously.

"What sign are you talking about, Lullaby?" asked Jamieson, setting up the board.

"Red," said Lullaby. "Why, the new sign that Saunders fellow has up."

"Souders," said Jamieson listlessly. "Not Saunders, or Sanders, or Sindors. Sowwders."

"All right," said Lullaby. "Sawders, then. Have you seen the sign, Jamieson?"

"Well, no, I haven't, Lullaby," said Jamieson.

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"What about the sign?"

"Ah," said Lullaby. "Wait till you see it. Old Man Barrett would laugh himself sick. Wait till you see it, Jolly J."

Not another word would Lullaby say about the sign. Jamieson would have to see it for himself. That was all.

The next day Jamieson hustled through the waste baskets and the garbage, took the plumber's friend up to the Winwoods' and relieved their bathtub of the momentary indigestion it was suffering from, cleaned the white-tile hall floors with blitzkrieg speed, and hustled into his brown suit to go down to the store. He pretended to himself that he had to do his shopping for the next day, since today was Saturday, but in his heart he could call up Mr. Brekniff at the First National and have it sent as usual.

The Irvington Arms shone with cleanliness. The windows had all been newly done (the tenants were supposed to take care of them themselves; so that was foul play on Souders' part); the front knob caught the Back Bay sun and reflected it into Jamieson's eyes; there was a large black sign with golden letters on the small green patch that Old Man Barrett had always termed the front yard.

Jamieson approached the sign warily. His eyesight was what you would expect it to be after twenty years of dim subpavement dwelling.

"1-2-3-room apartments. Inquire S. Samuel Souders,





Superintendent," he read.

"Superintendent!" Old Man Barrett's sign had always read simply and coyly: "See the janitor" and had been nameless. Jamieson's own sign modestly stated that if one wished to inquire about apartments, one should ring the bell marked "Janitor."

He and his friend, Old Man Barrett, were janitors. Jesse, his grandfather, Jonathan, his father, and his three older brothers, Jerome, Joshua, and Jaret, had all been janitors... And proud of it! Then along comes a sadfaced, skinny creature in black named S. Samuel Souders and decides he's a superintendent. Well--

As the weeks went by Jamieson could not deny that S. Samuel was a hard worker. The Irvington Arms had never looked so spotless and well cared-for as they did now. Jamieson wore himself out making the St. Botolph Street Manor glisten with soap and water as the Irvington Arms did. Even the tenants began to share his anti-Irvington feelings. When they passed by the Irvington Arms in the morning on their way to Huntington Avenue or the Back Bay Station, they would look with contempt on any Irvington resident who happened to be issuing from the gleaming front door near the sign: "1-2-3-room apartments. Inquire S. Samuel Souders, Superintendent." Even the St. Botolph Street Manor cats, mangy as some of them undoubtedly were, refused to acknowledge the tail waves of the Irvington Arms felines. It was a rivalry to the death.

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One Saturday night, Lullaby 'phoned Mr. Jamieson Jenks.

"It's Old Timers' Night at Convention Hall, Jolly J.," said Lullaby. "Why don't you join me in a bit of festivity? It will do you good."

"Well," said Jamieson, "to tell the truth, most of the tenants are away for the week-end. I think I will, Lullaby. I haven't enjoyed a good waltz for a long time."

At eight o'clock Jamieson clad in his brown-checked suit and burnt-orange tie, his red curls still damp and his face pink from his bath, stood at the corner of Garrison and St. Botolph Streets, in front of Convention Hall, right before the sign which proclaimed to the residents of Back Bay that Lennie Slipper and his Old Timers would be within from eight to twelve-thirty, and that all were welcome. Jamieson was waiting for Lullaby.

He saw two figures come out of Mrs. Santenelli's boarding house and start towards Convention Hall.

"Lullaby must have somebody with him," thought Jamieson. He hoped it was young Flanagan and not Bilge Donahue. Bilge was all right, but he looked a little too much like S. Samuel Souders. Jamieson wanted to forget S. Samuel Souders. He liked young Flanagan. He liked his gay talk and his easy way with the women. Jamieson wished he could be a poet like young Flanagan and have all the women chasing him about. Jamieson had always liked a bit of feminine company himself,





although he had never married. He liked his women rather soft and round, and somehow or other it had always been the hard, square ones who had liked Jamieson.

The two figures got close enough for Jamieson to see them more clearly. He realized that the shorter one, which he had supposed was Lullaby, had a pair of legs that could not possibly be Lullaby's legs. Lullaby's legs were useful, peripatetically speaking, but they did not satisfy Jamieson's starved aesthetic sense. These legs did. They were soft and round. They wore sheer rose stockings, and they teetered delightfully along on shiny black patent-leather heels. No they definitely did not belong to Lullaby. Jamieson knew he had no excuse for looking at them, but somehow or other he couldn't take his happy brown stare away.

He watched them come right up to within three feet of him. Then they turned and walked up the steps to Convention Hall. Jamieson turned too and stood looking at the doorway they had passed through.

After a while he became aware of eyes on the back of his head and looked around to find Lullaby regarding him quizzically.

"What's up, Jolly J.?" Lullaby asked him. "You've been watching that door for five minutes."

"Lullaby," said Jamieson solemnly, "through that door just walked the most beautiful pair of legs I've ever seen."

"Ah," said Lullaby, "who used to say he had no use for



women? Who is she?"

"I don't know her name, Lullaby, but you must. She came out of Mrs. Santenelli's. There was someone else with her, I think."

"That's Mrs. Campbell," said Lullaby. "She's the only one at Mrs. Santenelli's that even has a pair of legs. Pretty nice, huh?" He nudged Jamieson chummily. "I'll fix you up, Jolly J. Don't you worry."

"Mrs. Campbell?" inquired Jamieson.

"She's a widow, Jolly J. Got a boy in school. Nice kid. She's a fine woman. Just the one for you, Jolly J., a nice, friendly sort of woman."

"Well, Lullaby," said Jamieson, "let's go in and meet her then."

The usual crowd was there, Jamieson could see. He only went to the dance about twice a year, but there were always the same people. Some of them came because they were friendly; some because they were lonely; some because they liked to dance; and some because they needed the exercise. They were from eight to eighty, as Lullaby always said, mostly eighty. The four-piece orchestra (Lennie Slipper and his Old Timers) was playing loudly at one end of the hall. Mrs. Campbell and her friend were just coming out of the ladies' room, with noses freshly powdered. Mrs. Campbell had on a soft blue dress. The friend was in red.

Her face was even prettier than her legs, Jamieson

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noticed. It was soft and round. She had big soft blue eyes and a soft red mouth. Her hair was light brown with little streaks of gray in it near the temples and was slightly wavy.

"Hello, Mrs. Campbell," Jamieson heard Lullaby say.

"Good evening, Mr. Murdock." Her voice was soft too, Jamieson noticed. He had never heard such a soft voice.

"This is Jamieson Jenks, Mrs. Campbell," he heard Lullaby say again.

Mrs. Campbell smiled, and Jamieson felt his face and neck get as red as his hair.

He couldn't say a word. Mrs. Campbell introduced them to her friend, Miss Edythe Sneath. Jamieson and Lullaby shook hands with Miss Sneath and Lullaby asked her to dance. She laughed and said she'd just love to, and Jamieson was left alone with Mrs. Campbell.

He tried to think of something to say. He opened his mouth to ask her how she liked Back Bay, or how old her son was, or what she thought of Lullaby, or something sensible, but when he spoke, the words were, instead:

"You certainly are the prettiest woman I've ever seen."

Mrs. Campbell raised those soft blue eyes to Jamieson's brown ones and smiled and said very pleasantly, "Why, thank you, Jolly J."

When Jamieson heard her say Jolly J., he knew she must know all about him, and he smiled too, and asked her to dance.

They were getting along famously when Jamieson noticed

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a familiar lank figure in dark blue watching them. Mrs. Campbell noticed it too and waved. Jamieson felt all his new joy rushing away.

"Do you know S. Samuel Souders, Mrs. Campbell?" he asked mournfully, knowing she did, but hoping she would say she wished she didn't.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Campbell, "he's my brother."

Jamieson's heart took the next waltz step with the music and then sank, with a soft thud, from its usual high position.

"Oh," he said.

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, for the next six months Jamieson courted Alicia Campbell. He bought Saturday Evening Posts from her son, Soup. He bought Fanny Farmer's candy, Family Size, for Alicia and watched the other boarders, including Lullaby, devour it. He rose an hour earlier each morning and practiced la Conga, in preparation for Saturday night. He bought Dr. Bricklebrack's Hair Restorer and massaged the freckled scalp between the two red curls. He wrote poetry and entitled it: "To A. C." or "To the Fair Alicia".

Alicia seemed to like Jamieson, too. There was only one obstacle in Jamieson's way and that was S. Samuel Souders. Besides making Jamieson's professional life a fearful thing to see, he was wilting the bloom off the rose of his romance.

For months Jamieson worried and schemed. He told





Alicia horrible stories about the Irvington Arms, knowing that S. Samuel would hear them eventually from her soft lips. He told her about the madman who had the back apartment on the tenth floor and who hated "superintendents". He told her S. Samuel had a look very much like a friend of his, a janitor too, come to think of it, who died in three months from tuberculosis: S. Samuel should give up janitorial work and do something else. He told her the train gases from the Back Bay Station were fatal when breathed any length of time, and he pointed out that S. Samuel's suite was right on a level with the railroad tracks.

But it did no good; S. Samuel stayed on. The Irvington Arms got cleaner every day, and more attractive, and S. Samuel sadder, and more silent. Jamieson knew he could never be happy, married to a woman, however soft and round she was, whose brother was a better janitor than he. He lost weight. The happy zest he had had in his work deserted him. He was no longer the Jolly Janitor.

His despair was contagious. All the tenants in the St. Botolph Street Manor became depressed. The cats slunk about in back alleys, leaving the sunny front street to the triumphant Irvington Arms felines. The St. Botolph Street Manor began to get a dreary, unloved look. Screws came out of doorknobs, and nobody even bothered to ask that they be fixed. Pipes became clogged and were permitted to choke and belch with no one's dropping in Drano to aid their digestion.



People didn't even bother picking up the free soap coupons that were left at their doors. They just let them pile up and get soiled from being walked upon. The St. Botolph Street Manor lost its morale. And back of all this decay and degeneration stood the dark, joyless figure of S. Samuel Souders, the sad but perfect superintendent of the Irvington Arms, the man who was so secretive that his own sister didn't know what the first S. of his name stood for.

One Wednesday morning in late October, Lullaby came down to see Jamieson. He had a newspaper in his hand. Jamieson was not in his suite. Lullaby heard him up on the second floor. He was slowly and listlessly sweeping down the stairs.

"Jamieson," called Lullaby, "come here. I have good news for you."

Jamieson came down the stairs, the broom in his hand.

"What is it, Lullaby?" he asked morosely. "What good news could there be?"

"It's the draft, Jamieson," cried Lullaby. "Souders is going in the draft."

Well, you never saw such a change come over a man. One minute he was stoopshouldered, and old, and discouraged. He was a has-been, a man without hope, without ambition, without a future. Then he heard those words of Lullaby's and he changed. He became the gay, debonair Jamieson of pre-Souders days. His two red curls looked redder than ever.





His carriage became that of a man of energy and vigor. His eye lighted up with joy. He threw down his broom and hugged Lullaby.

"Lullaby Murdock," said Jamieson Jenks, "you've brought me the best news since the Repeal. I'm going to see Alicia."

Well, he dashed down to his suite, took a shower, changed to his brown suit, and ran down to Mrs. Santenelli's boarding house. Alicia was in her room sewing one of the Raggedy Ann dolls she sold to gift shops to make her living.

"Alicia," cried Jamieson Jenks. "Alicia, my love, will you marry me?"

"Yes, I will, Jamieson," said Alicia softly, and she stitched the other black shoebutton eye on the Raggedy Ann doll.

S. Samuel Souders was given a banquet by the tenants of the Irvington Arms, and left for Camp Edwards the following week. The very next day after his departure, Alicia and Jamieson were married by the Reverend Swithin Sneath, Edythe's father, who was a retired minister. Edythe and Lullaby stood up for them. They went to New York on their honeymoon, and Young Barrett, Old Man Barrett's nephew, took care of the St. Botolph Street Manor while Jamieson was gone. Young Barrett wasn't a very hard worker, but he was pleasant and willing, and the tenants were so glad Jamieson was happy again they didn't mind waiting a week for him.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the existence of solutions of the system of equations (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ .

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While Jamieson was in New York, he visited all the apartment houses he could and came back satisfied that the St. Botolph Street Manor was the finest of them all.

Everything is happy and pleasant again at the St. Botolph Street Manor. The tenants cash in the soap coupons; the water flows clear and untroubled through the pipes; the white-tile halls shine; the mangy gentleman cats lie out front on the sidewalk and leer cheerfully at all the mangy lady cats in the neighborhood.

Mr. and Mrs. Jenks are well liked by the tenants. They are known to all as the Jolly Janitor and his fair Alicia. Soup, Mrs. Campbell's son, who fortunately has no avuncular characteristics, lives with them too, and he doesn't mind Jamieson's calling him Carleton, since Alicia dislikes "Soup".

Young Barrett has succeeded S. Samuel Souders at the Irvington Arms. He is well liked. He has changed the sign out front; it now reads: "1-2-3-room apartments. Barrett, Janitor." The tenants have to look after their own windows again, and young Barrett keeps the neighborhood janitors well informed as to all that happens at the Irvington Arms.





Concerning Lullaby Murdock and Miss Sneath

The Reverend Swithin Geoffrey Sneath was close to eighty, and his daughter, Edythe, an angular thirty-three. They had a modest domicile in Huntington Hall, just around the corner from Irvington Street. The Reverend Swithin would say to his friend, Miss Aspasia Sligsby, or to Mr. Launcelot Murton, her suitor, "My daughter, Edythe, and I will expect you to tea on Saturday in our modest domicile. We shall be most honored by your company." The "modest domicile" which the Reverend Swithin Sneath thus alluded to was listed on the janitor's books as "Number 9--living room, bedroom, kitchenette, and bath." The Reverend Swithin would facetiously speak of taking a shower in the bathette or ask Edythe if she had seen his rubbers, size fifteen, in the hallette.

Swithin was fond of his little joke. On rainy days inevitably he would call up Edythe at the Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company on Clarendon Street, where she spent the hours from nine to four each day writing in her Palmer method hand: The Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company--and ask her if she would buy chipped beef or bread, or perhaps cream or sausages on her way home.

"Well, as a matter of fact, Father, it's raining too hard for me to walk. I shall take a bus, I believe," Edythe would answer.

"That will be rather heavy for you, Edythe," the

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Reverend Swithin would say, and, chortling merrily, would hang up.

His humor was always on the same youthful plane. His little jokes were Peter Pans to him. They never grew old. He would wait eagerly for a suitable situation to arise so that one of his favorite bon mots might be popped into it.

Occasionally, just for a lark, he would phone his friend, Silvius Brekniff, at the First National Store.

"Is this the First National Store?" he would ask, speaking through his hand so that Silvius would not recognize the voice.

"Yes, sir. What can I do for you, sir?" Mr. Brekniff would answer in his humble Uriah Heep tone.

"Do you have Sir Walter Raleigh in the can?" Swithin's clerical voice would have a convincingly serious note.

"Yes, sir, we do," Mr. Brekniff would answer.

"Well, let him out, then," Swithin would chortle and hang up.

Both Mr. Brekniff and Edythe, Swithin's daughter, were most tolerant of these little pleasantries of Swithin's. They would always respond in the approved fashion, and Swithin's Puckish heart would be cheered by the never-failing success of his little joke.

The Reverend Swithin's interests were all in the past: old jokes, old families, old customs. He spent his days designing heraldic coats for the few favored persons whom

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he liked. His evenings, after he had done the dinner dishes, were devoted to tracing the genealogies of his friends.

The Sneath apartment was a most interesting place. In the reception hall a golden griffin, with an astonishingly keen blue eye, clambered up the wall, dragging by his tail a bodiless silver arm. On the left wall, at right angles to the golden griffin, were four green lions: one, fiercely leaping into the silver air; one, in a coy begging position; the third, meekly waiting for attention; and the last, entirely indifferent and asleep. The Reverend Swithin was very fond of these green lions. He had painted them himself on heavy parchment, and they hung in four huge English oak frames.

Swithin's bedroom was furnished tastefully in three full suits of mail and a miscellaneous wardrobe consisting of several hauberks and a few odd visors. Red gonfanons swung from the chandelier, and a pale green sleeve embroidered in daffodil yellow, in a black frame, hung over his walnut bed. The sleeve was one given by the Lady Alison to Wilfred, one of Swithin's daring ancestors. The sleeve was as clean as the day Wilfred had received it; there had been quite a snow storm the morning he was to have carried it on his lance, and the combat had been postponed because of the weather. Lady Alison had run off with Wilfred's young squire, Ulric, soon after that, but Wilfred had always kept the sleeve as a souvenir; it gave him a pleasantly wanton feeling when he thought of the Lady Alison's subsequent career.



It took a Theseus to get from the bedroom door to the window, there were so many clanging coats of mail about and so many greaves to bruise the knees of the passerby, but Swithin liked his bedroom just as it was. Edythe had tried unsuccessfully to put a few of the suits of armor in the utility closet with the broom and the carpet sweeper, in an attempt to relieve the clutter, but they only knocked the door open in the middle of the night and fell to the hall floor with such force that she was almost snapped into the wall by her murphy bed in response.

The kitchen was like any other kitchen. Edythe had put her foot down there. Only the crossed lances over the sink betrayed Swithin's presence in the home. Of course, there was the lean hard shape of Edythe's harp, covered in black, looming behind the refrigerator. Swithin liked to hear her play "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes" as he, in a green rubber apron, painted his family trees of an evening on the kitchen table.

The Sneath living room resembled a medieval banquet hall. Eight sturdy English oak chairs with red leather backs and seats raised their Gothic peaks before the triple windows hung in monk's cloth. There was a large round English oak table with claw feet. The two side walls were hung with Saxon and Norman shields. Two long red leather benches reached the length of the room. The murphy bed was concealed by a seven-foot portrait in sepia of a chaste looking white horse and an







even more chaste looking brown knight. The back wall of the living room and the whole length of the reception hall formed one long bookway. The shelves were filled with hand tooled leather volumes of Malory, the Chanson de Roland, the Bedier version of Tristan and Iseult, Aucassin et Nicolette, and the more recent treatments of the Arthurian and Carolingian cycles.

There was a complete section devoted to Beowulf, the Volsunga Saga, and the Nibelungenlied. Swithin was starting another bookcase on the opposite side of the hall for the housing of the Mabinogion and Kalevala legends.

On the Arthurian section stood a carved black ebony hand, bearing a real falcon on its wrist. The falcon sported a red silk hood, with a gold fringe. There was also a green and black cock with golden spurs gazing flirtatiously at a modest grey merlin. Swithin has been on the lookout for a stuffed white unicorn to lighten up the hall, but had never been able to secure one. Mr. Murton said he remembered his great uncle Percivale Westcott of Sussex used to have a white unicorn. Percivale's father's uncle has caught it one day when he had been hunting down near the Welsh border. Mr. Murton said he didn't know what had happened to the unicorn after his great uncle Percivale died. He had a strong suspicion that his cousin, Roger, great uncle Percivale's heir, had filed off the horn and put rockers on the silver hooves, for the last time Mr. Murton had been to Sussex he had seen his niece, Rowena, frisking about on a hobby horse that had a rather moth-eaten look.



Mr. Murton had promised to write to Roger and ask him, however, and Swithin was keeping up his hopes.

Swithin also wanted a woodland green dragon, but none of the taxidermists he knew could get him one. There was a definite scarcity of dragons, they told him. As a matter of fact, one of them admitted he never remembered seeing a dragon, anyway, let alone a woodland green one. Mr. Skinner, the taxidermist who specialized in stuffed rabbits, said he supposed all the dragons had moved to China long ago, when Beowulf had defeated Grendel. Mr. Skinner looked on the Grendel-Beowulf fight as a trial by combat between the warriors and the dragons. All the dragons had had to flee Europe, he said, since the decision had gone against them.

Swithin didn't see why there couldn't be a few left in America someplace. He still kept his eyes open when he walked through the Fenway. He thought he had seen one, one Sunday afternoon, but it had turned out to be a large green dowager on her way to Mrs. Jack Gardner's Palace. The dowager was puffing a bit in her eagerness to get to the Palace in time for the violin concert, and Swithin had mistaken the puffs for dragonlike smoke.

Swithin had drawn up the genealogical trees of Aspasia Sligsby (She was the sixty-ninth descendant of Humphrey de Slace, one of William of Normandy's men, who had been the first to introduce mushroom sauce to English beef.). Swithin had given Miss Sligsby an illuminated tree with green and red





branches. "Aspasia Sligsby" was the small rosy twig burgeoning on the left side of the page, from Charles and Matilda Sligsby. Swithin was at present working on Mr. Murton's tree. He was having a little difficulty, for it seemed that Mr. Murton's paternal great-great-great-grandfather had lived a double life and had had two sets of offspring to his credit. Swithin told Mr. Murton he was afraid he would have to put a bend sinister across his escutcheon, but that since the bend was azure and the background argent, the effect would be most attractive. Swithin's own shield had a bend sinister, for there had been a terrific storm the night Prince John visited the country castle of the Marquis of Singingham, whose ward, Lady Rosamund, was afraid of lightning.

When Edythe first introduced Swithin to Lullaby Murdock, whom she had met through Alicia Campbell, now Mrs. Jamieson Jenks, Swithin wanted to know what kind of a name Lullaby was.

"I do not recall any Sir Lullaby in Mr. Tennyson's Idylls, Edythe, nor does Sir Thomas mention any knight hight thus. I fear this Mr. Murdock is not fit company of the direct descendant of Prince John," Swithin told his daughter.

"But, Father," Edythe protested, "Lullaby isn't his real name, of course. His real name is Ronald."

"A noble Scot?" Swithin seemed pleased. "I shall look up his lineage at once. In the meantime, you may continue to accompany Mr. Murdock to these balls held at--ah--Convention



Hall."

Affairs proceeded smoothly for a few months. Edythe arose at seven each morning, got Swithin his Holland Rusk, soft-boiled egg, and buttermilk, had two cups of tea herself, and three small equilateral triangles of wheat toast, and left for the Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company. Swithin spent the day writing to genealogical societies and working on Mr. Murton's armorial bearings. In the evenings, while Edythe and Lullaby sat on the red leather benches discussing some new dish Lullaby had composed spontaneously that day at work to conceal a slightly fatty piece of roast beef or a shortage of peas, or while Edythe read to Lullaby from the Christian Science Monitor and they followed the geographical blackouts taking place in Europe, Swithin would work on Lullaby's family tree. With the help of Lullaby's Bible, he had traced the Murdock family back through Ellis Island to the Murdochs of Glendoon, but he couldn't seem to find any mention of Auld Jamie, Lullaby's direct ancestor, beyond the listing of his death on the last page of the Bible and the cryptic words after the date:

Auld Jamie, the Murdoch of Glendoon      d. 1511  
Mae we na sae his ilk mair.

Swithin asked Lullaby what the sentiment might mean. Lullaby imagined it meant that Auld Jamie had been such a wonderful credit to the clan, his like would never be met again in the family annals. But Swithin had his doubts:





Mae we na sae his ilk mair sounded a bit too fervent to him. He wrote to Lullaby's twelvth cousin, Robin Murdock of Nova Scotis, of whose existence Lullaby had been unaware, and inquired if he could throw any light on Auld Jamie. Robin, who was dead, did not answer, but Janet Fitzs, his daughter, wrote back to Swithin in about a month and said her family Bible Auld Jamie's death with the inscription:

Auld Jamie, the Murdoch of Glendoon    d. 1511  
Na mair mae Harry's deere flea.

Swithin was aghast. Auld Jamie was a poacher of the English king's deer and Swithin, as an Englishman born and a great respecter of other people's property, was thoroughly off Lullaby and his infamous ancestor, Auld Jamie, for life.

He had received Janet Fitzs' letter by the nine o'clock mail. By evening, Swithin's mind was made up. He said nothing to Edythe as he set the creamed tuna fish, baked Idaho potato, and pineapple cole slaw before her. He had prepared her favorite meal to help her withstand the blow he planned to deal her after dinner. The butterscotch pudding was eaten in silence. Then Swithin spoke.

"Edythe," he said, "I want you to leave the dishes for a moment. I feel it my duty to communicate to you a certain piece of unfortunate information which has come to my attention."

"What is it, Father?" (Did he see Lullaby squeeze my hand last night as he left? Edythe worried.)



"It's that young Murdock," said Swithin (Lullaby was forty-one.). "He is never to enter our modest domicile again. He has betrayed my trust in him. Look, daughter," he said in judicial solemnity, and he pointed to the round English oak table. Edythe looked.

In the center of the table lay the Murdock family Bible open to the certain back page which started:

Tamas Murdoch, son of Young Jamie Murdoch of Glendoon  
b. 1511

and continued:

Auld Jamie, the Murdoch of Glendoon                      d. 1511  
Mae we na sae his ilk mair.

Next to Lullaby's Bible lay the completed family tree which Swithin had been working on for four months. At the tip of the Murdock plaid branches was the black name of Auld Jamie and after it the five words: Robber of the king's deer.

Edythe beheld the shame and the dread secret of Lullaby Murdock's ancestral past. She wept.

That evening when Lullaby came to call, the door was opened by Swithin, who handed him his Bible and the ill-omened tree and told Lullaby he was not to call again. The door of the Sneath domicile was shut in the honest, bewildered face of the short-order cook.

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Now, the Reverend Swithin Geoffrey Sneath was a good





man, if a bit prejudiced, but he knew nothing of the heart of woman. Day by day, Edythe, the angular maiden of thirty-five, mourned and lost weight and became less and less angular and more and more plain perpendicular. She was like the long pale finger of the gray Norn, stalking the Avenue from Irvington to Clarendon each morning, noon, and evening. Now and then the equally mournful figure of Lullaby Murdock, her thwarted suitor, would appear from behind a parked taxicab and watch her hungrily as she passed.

Edythe's sorrow at being bereft of the pleasant, if tainted, society of the short-order cook descendant of Auld Jamie began to affect her work. One sunny May morning as she was writing busily at her desk, thinking of Lullaby and his unfortunate kinship with Auld Jamie, the Murdoch of Glendoon, the voice of Mr. Pidgiekins, her superior, interrupted her thoughts.

"Yes, Mr. Pidgiekins," Edythe replied mechanically to the unheeded statement of Mr. Pidgiekins which had first attracted her attention.

"At four o'clock, then, Miss Sneath," said Mr. Pidgiekins, and he walked away.

Poor Edythe hadn't the vaguest idea what was to happen at four o'clock.

"If Mr. Pidgiekins doesn't come up here to see me, I'll go down to see him," she decided.

She didn't really much care what happened. Nothing



could be worse than not seeing Lullaby. Edythe had not realized the charm of Lullaby until the advent of Auld Jamie. With the revelation of Auld Jamie's wickedness, Lullaby, the inoffensive culinary speedster, had acquired the fascinating appeal of a daring ruffian of the Scottish border. Lullaby had changed from some one who was pleasant to talk to to a man whose alluring past ostracized him from respectable homes like the Sneaths'.

At four o'clock Edythe went down to the third floor to Mr. Pidgiekins' office. She knocked timidly.

"Yes, yes, what is it?" Mr. Pidgiekins' voice had lost none of its work-hour testiness now that business was over for the day.

"It's Miss Sneath from the signature department, Mr. Pidgiekins," Edythe said in the depressed tone that had taken possession of her since the leaving of Lullaby.

"Come in, Miss Sneath." Mr. Pidgiekins' voice had now become even more testy than ever. It was evident that Miss Sneath from the signature department was definitely not a member of Mr. Pidgiekins' winning team.

Edythe entered.

Mr. Pidgiekins sat at his desk with his left hand on a tall stack of what appeared to be form letters. When Edythe got closer to the desk she noticed that they were copies of Form Letter 289167, the form she signed day in and day out.

"Miss Sneath," said Mr. Pidgiekins, "I am sorry to





inform you that the Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company is dispensing with your services. We, Mr. Filgers and myself, have taken this step, since we feel that no longer do you have the interests of the Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company at heart. We, Mr. Filgers and myself, feel that the Benjamin Franklin Life Insurance Company would do well to replace you with a more efficient signer of Form letter 289167."

"Why, Mr. Pidgiekins," said poor Edythe. This loss of material position added to the loss of matrimonial prospect was most upsetting to her. "Why, Mr. Pidgiekins, what have I done?"

"Done?" Mr. Pidgiekins' voice rose ever so slightly. "Is this or is this not your handwriting, Miss Sneath? We, Mr. Filgers and myself, would like to know."

Mr. Pidgiekins held up the top sheet from the stack of Form Letters 289167. Edythe squinted at it near-sightedly.

"Yes, Mr. Pidgiekins."

"Well," said Mr. Pidgiekins, "look at it." His voice was decidedly much higher and louder than usual. It sounded like the visor of the Reverend Swithin's suit of armor, when Edythe had forgotten to oil it for a week.

Edythe looked. Form Letter 289167, neatly printed, lay before her. She read it through from "Dear Policyholder:" to "Yours for a longer life". Then, at the very end, she read, in her own unmistakeable Palmer method handwriting, the words: The Benjamyn Franklyn Lyfe Insurance Company.

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"Three thousand, two hundred and seventy-five letters," creaked Mr. Pidgiekins.

"Oh, Mr. Pidgiekins," was all poor Edythe could say.

That evening Edythe and Swithin sat on the red leather Gothic peaked chairs at the round English oak table and bewailed the economic catastrophe which had befallen them so suddenly. At thirty-five, with no special training and nothing to recommend her in the world except the reputation of always having been a nice girl, Edythe felt she had due cause to grieve.

"If only Lullaby were here," she said, momentarily forgetting Swithin's complete antipathy to her former suitor.

"In what way could the presence of any descendant of Auld Jamie possibly alleviate our misfortune, Edythe?"

"Oh," said Edythe, "Lullaby can always think of something."

Swithin made no answer.

Edythe spent the next day visiting all the book stores in the hope that some one would see in her a potential saleswoman. No one did.

She returned home at six, sadder than ever. As she walked down the corridor to the apartment, she seemed to hear a song of revelry and Swithin's cracked voice singing some tune or other most gaily. The identity of the tune was not distinguishable under the stress of Swithin's ancient breathing, but there was no doubt it was gay. There seemed to be some





kind of musical accompaniment with the singing, but Edythe, who knew only the harp, could not recognize the instrument.

She opened the door and walked in. As she hurried past the kitchen to the living room, she noticed that the table had not been set as usual. She thought she heard the long-missed voice of Lullaby Murdock, the short-order cook, but could not be sure. There were other voices also. Edythe went down the bookway, past the red-hooded falcon, past the space Swithin was saving for Mr. Murton's great uncle Percivale's unicorn, if it could be found, past the four green lions into the baronial living room.

The first person she saw was Lullaby Murdock, dressed in kilts and a green and red Glendoon bonnet, playing the bagpipes. O'Flanagan, the poet from the fifth floor at Mrs. Santenelli's, stood with his lips pursed and his flute ready for a trill, his black silk bow tie hanging low over his pale green shirt. Mr. Murton and Miss Sligsby sat on one of the long red leather benches, touching toes ever so gently, and Swithin, in his clerical frock coat, was putting the last sure touch of the careful host on the round English oak table, shining with the golden goblets and the red and blue banded plates which were the pride of his collector's heart. Edythe knew something of importance had happened.

"Hello, everyone," she said breathlessly.

Lullaby dropped his bagpipes and ran to take her coat, and everyone smiled happily at her.



"Swithin's got a contract to do all the escutcheons and family trees for all the D.A.R., Edythe," cried Lullaby.

"Miss Sligsby and I have arranged it all. He has enough orders to last him for five years right now. He's afraid he'll have to get someone to help him, he'll be so busy."

"I have noticed your keen sensitivity to the various hues used in heraldry, Launcelot," said Swithin, addressing Mr. Murton. "If you would care to, I should be most pleased to have you assist me with the coloring," he continued, smilingly.

Mr. Murton flushed with pleasure and said he would be most pleased to assist.

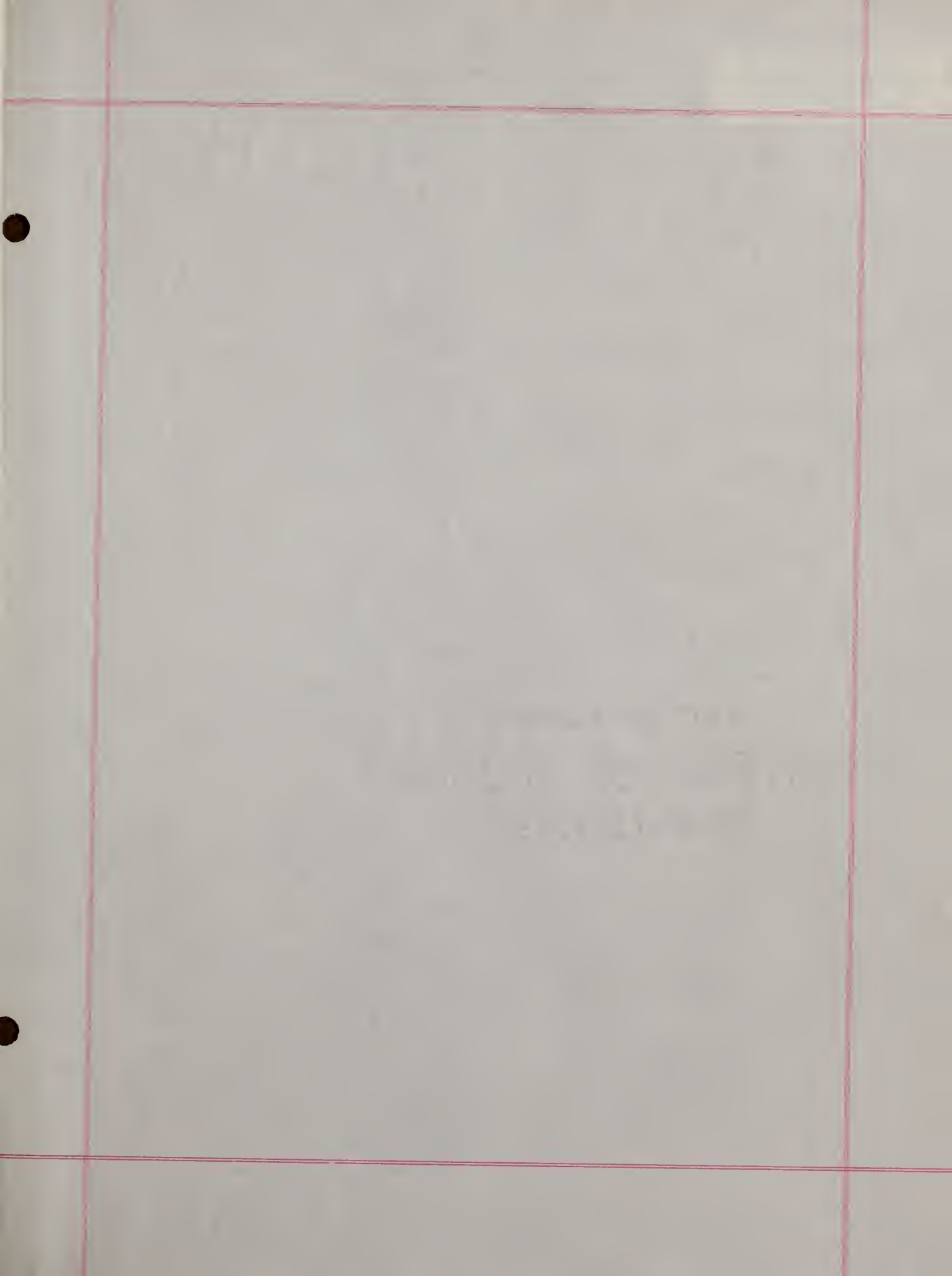
Swithin beamed at Lullaby and Edythe still standing together near the door, holding hand in pure happiness.

"Mr. Ronald Murdock," said Swithin impressively, "has proven himself a true friend, Edythe. I feel that the matter of Auld Jamie might well be forgotten. After all," said Swithin generously, "the facts of the case are not known. Perhaps King Harry's deer were trampling the Murdoch's heather. One must be fair. To tell the truth I have often suspected Harry Tudor of having been a bit inconsiderate of others' rights. Now let us have dinner."

Ruth Ennice

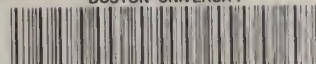








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